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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2004

7 Marines killed in Iraq suicide attack

Bombing near Fallujah is deadliest day for U.S. forces in 4 months Page 3



A destroyed vehicle lies at the site of a massive car bomb attack on the outskirts of Fallujah on Monday. Seven U.S. Marines and three Iraqi National Guard soldiers died in the attack, the military says. The force of the blast wrecked two Humvee vehicles and hurled the suicide attacker's car engine far from the site, witnesses and military officials said.

AP

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

Nation

California wildfires: Firefighters were hampered by erratic wind and low humidity Monday as they made slow progress against a fire that had burned nearly 12,000 acres and four homes in the Northern California wine country.

The fire, which started Friday northeast of Geyserville in Sonoma County, had been 20 percent contained and full containment was not expected until Wednesday, said Janet Marshall, spokeswoman for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Two firefighters had been injured, but not critically. About 40 residents had been evacuated from the area, about 60 miles north of San Francisco.

The fire also threatened major power lines from 21 generating plants in the Geysers, the world's largest geothermal power facility.

Chicken wing champion: A woman weighing barely 100 pounds gobbled more than five pounds of chicken wings to set a new world record and win the U.S.A. Chicken Wing Eating Championship at the National Buffalo Wing Festival in Buffalo, N.Y.

Sonya Thomas of Alexandria, Va., ate 161 wings in 12 minutes Sunday.

Known by her nickname, "The Black Widow," Thomas has won several other eating competitions. She said she prepared by eating only one meal Saturday and not eating at all before the contest Sunday.

A record 66,000 people attended the three-day wing festival, which also featured a bobbing contest with a pool full of Buffalo wings and blue cheese dressing.

World

Israel separation barrier: Israeli officials have rerouted an unfinished stretch of the separation barrier so it will not incorporate West Bank land on the Israeli side, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said Monday.

Also Monday, two senior Egyptian officials met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in the West Bank for talks on Israel's planned withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

And Palestinian officials threatened to boycott a conference of donor nations this month set to focus on the Gaza withdrawal.

Palestinians want the meeting's agenda expanded to incorporate the internationally backed "road map" peace plan.

Mad cow disease: Japan could stop testing newborn and younger cows for mad cow disease without posing a risk to public health, a special panel decided Monday in a ruling that could influence talks to lift Tokyo's ban on American beef imports.

Japan shut its doors to U.S. beef last December after the discovery of the United States' first case of mad cow disease, and has urged Washington to improve national testing of every cow as is required in Japan.

The panel of the Cabinet's Food Safety Commission concluded, however, that measures already in place to remove parts of the cows most at risk for infection meant that excluding young or newborn cattle from testing would not threaten consumers, said Hi-



Will work in Iraq: A job recruiter reads out the names to job-seekers Monday as they gathered outside a Manila job recruitment agency hoping to land a job in war-torn Iraq. The workers gathered at the agency following an announcement that the government is considering lifting its ban of overseas Filipino workers to Iraq, which was imposed due to the kidnapping of truck driver Angelo Dela Cruz. But with the country's uncertain economy growth and the government admitting a fiscal crisis recently, Filipinos are still willing to take the risk.

roshi Aoki, a commission official.

Eating beef from a diseased cow is believed to cause the fatal human variant of the disease, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

India and Pakistan talks: The foreign ministers of India and Pakistan concluded talks Monday in New Delhi declaring that the South Asian rivals had made significant progress in improving relations, despite their inability to agree on the future of divided Kashmir.

In a turning point in relations between the nuclear-armed neighbors, the foreign ministers sat side by side, publicly airing their deep divisions over the Himalayan province, yet pledging to move forward in ways that could ease tensions in the region.

"We both are sincerely committed to carrying forward the dialogue," Indian External Affairs Minister Pratibha Patil told reporters after finishing two days of talks with Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshed Khan Monday.

The mountainous Kashmir region has been the flashpoint of two wars between India and Pakistan since it was divided between them following the partition of the subcontinent by Britain at independence in 1947.

Bird flu outbreak: Malaysia announced its second outbreak of deadly bird flu in three weeks Monday, the latest near a northern village close to the border with Thailand where the disease was first detected.

The Veterinary Department said that lethal H5N1 strain of avian influenza was believed to be the cause of the deaths of 10 chickens and 20 quail in Kampung Belian, a village three miles from the outbreak announced Aug. 17.

The discovery dashed plans to declare Malaysia free of the disease, which has caused massive losses among poultry farmers due to import bans by the European Union, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and the Philippines.

The H5N1 strain of bird flu has been blamed for the deaths of at least 27 people this year in Vietnam and Thailand, and Asia has sought for months to stop it from spreading.

Talks at Alitalia airline: The future of Italian flagship carrier Alitalia is at stake in a meeting with unions Monday to reveal the number of planned job cuts as part of a restructuring plan aimed at averting collapse. The plan is expected to include slashing about a third of 22,000 jobs, but Alitalia officials have refused to confirm the figure.

Union approval of the recovery plan is crucial to the company's survival as it would allow Alitalia to access a \$488 million loan approved by the Italian government and the European Union.

European Union membership: The prime ministers of Croatia and Macedonia praised their close political ties Monday and pledged to work together toward eventual European Union membership for their countries.

Macedonia's premier, Hristo Kostov, said the two former Yugoslav republics have no outstanding questions between them, and that their friendly relations can "stand as a model" for others in the Balkans.

"Our cooperation should help both of us in efforts to join the European Union and NATO," Kostov said after talks in Macedonia with his Croatian counterpart, Ivica Sanader.

Polio vaccine boycott ends: Health workers met scattered refusals from parents Monday as medical teams deployed door-to-door in this largely Muslim Nigerian state, rushing to inoculate 3.8 children against polio after Muslim leaders lifted their boycott of the vaccine.

Monday's emergency inoculation campaign was the second since July, when Kano state Gov. Ibrahim Shekarau ended an 11-month ban of the vaccine.

Extremist Muslim clerics had led the boycott, claiming the polio vaccine was part of a U.S.-led plot to render Nigeria's Muslims infertile or infect them with AIDS. The boycott in Africa's most populous state spawned a resurgence of the crippling virus across Africa, infecting children in more than a dozen formerly polio-free countries and threatening a worldwide U.N.-backed initiative to eliminate the virus by 2005.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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Marines die in suicide attack outside Fallujah

3 Iraqi soldiers killed; several others wounded

BY KIM HOUSEGO

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A suicide attacker sped up to a U.S. military convoy outside Fallujah and detonated an explosives-packed vehicle on Monday, killing seven Marines and three Iraqi soldiers, U.S. military officials said. It was the deadliest day for American forces in four months.

The force of the blast on a dusty stretch of wasteland nine miles north of Fallujah, a hotbed of Sunni insurgents, wrecked two Humvee vehicles and hurled the suicide car's engine far from the site, witnesses and military officials said.

The bombing underscored the challenges U.S. commanders face in securing Fallujah and surrounding Anbar province, the heartland of a Sunni Muslim insurgency bent on driving coalition forces from the country.

U.S. forces have not patrolled in Fallujah since ending a three-week siege of the city in April that had been aimed at rooting out militiamen. Insurgents have strengthened their hold on Fallujah since then.

With Monday's death, 990 U.S. servicemen have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq in March 2003, according to a count by The Associated Press based on Defense Department figures.

Three soldiers were wounded Monday in a roadside bombing in eastern Baghdad.

After the suicide blast outside Fallujah, west of the capital, medical teams in helicopters ferried away the injured from the blazing wreckage and troops sealed off the area.

Fallujah hospital officials said

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, 976 U.S. servicemen have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq in March 2003, according to the Defense Department. Of those, 730 died as a result of hostile action and 246 died of non-hostile causes.

The British military has reported 64 deaths; Italy, 18; Spain, 11; Poland, 10; Bulgaria, six; Ukraine, six; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; and Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and the Netherlands have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 838 U.S. servicemen have died — 621 as a result of hostile action and 217 of non-hostile causes, according to the military's numbers Friday.

There was no update provided over the weekend.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ Two soldiers were killed Sunday in a mortar attack on a logistical base west of Baghdad.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Nicholas Wilk, 23, Tampa, Fla. died Friday from enemy action in Iraq's Anbar Province; assigned to 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1 Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif.

■ Marine 1st Lieutenant Ronald Winchester, 25, Rockville Center, N.Y., died Friday from enemy action in Iraq's Anbar Province; assigned to 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1 Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif.

four Iraqis were wounded by gunfire from U.S. troops near the site of the bombing, but the U.S. military had no confirmation.

The military condemned the bombing as "a desperate act of inhumanity" but insisted American troops will stay the course in Iraq until local forces are in a position to take over security operations. The slain Americans belonged to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

Hours after the attack, an unmanned U.S. spy plane crashed in Fallujah. Afterward, jubilant residents picked up pieces of debris and danced in the streets, displaying pieces of the aircraft to reporters, witnesses.

Since the Marine siege ended, gunmen have been using the city as a base to manufacture car bombs and launch attacks on U.S. and Iraqi government forces. Fal-

lujah has become a virtual no-go zone for U.S. troops, though American warplanes have repeatedly carried out airstrikes against alleged militant safe houses there. Friday's attack resulted in the largest number of Americans killed in combat in a single day since May 2, when nine U.S. troops died in separate mortar attacks and roadside bombings in Baghdad, Ramadi and Kirkuk.

Seven troops were killed on two days last month, but in each case, there were six Americans and one foreign coalition member who died. On Aug. 21, six U.S. service members and one Polish soldier died in combat, and six were killed on Aug. 15, along with a Ukrainian soldier.

In other developments:

■ Gunmen shot and killed a Norwegian woman married to an Iraqi Kurd in the northern city of



A destroyed vehicle lies at the site of a massive car bomb attack Monday on the outskirts of Fallujah, 40 miles northwest of Baghdad. Seven U.S. Marines and three Iraqi soldiers died in the suicide attack and several others were wounded, U.S. military officials said.

Kirkuk and slightly wounded her daughter, police said.

■ U.S. and Iraqi national guardsmen clashed with insurgents in the northern city of Mosul, the U.S. military said. Hospital officials said three civilians were killed and nine others wounded in the fighting late Sunday.

■ Iraqi police seized a car packed with explosives in Kirkuk that authorities believed was going to be used by a suicide bomber. The seizure came two days after a suicide car bombing outside a Kirkuk police academy killed 20 people and injured 50.

■ Iraqi Minister of State Qassim Dawoud said the trial of Saddam and other indicted officials from his regime would start "within a few weeks... before the end of this year and before (Iraqi) elections," which are planned for January.

Saddam so far has seen seven

U.S. forces have not patrolled in Fallujah since ending a three-week siege in April. Insurgents have tightened their hold on Fallujah since then.

preliminary charges filed against him, including gassing thousands of Kurds in 1988, the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the suppression of 1991 revolts by Kurds and Shiites, the murders of religious and political leaders and the mass displacement of Kurds in the 1960s.

Captors free Turk

ANKARA, Turkey — A Turkish driver taken hostage in Iraq was freed by his captors on Monday, Turkey's foreign minister said. The release came a day after the driver's company said it would withdraw from Iraq in line with kidnappers' demands.

Mithat Civi, was released in Iraq "as a result of our intense efforts," Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul told reporters in Ankara.

The Turkish transport company that employed Civi, Remy International, was on Sunday it was withdrawing from Iraq in an effort to save the life of the 48-year-old hostage, whom Iraqi militants had threatened to behead.

Remy, a company based in the southern Turkish city of Antalya, was the latest in a series of Turkish companies to pull out of Iraq to try to secure the release of captured employees.

Drivers released

AMMAN, Jordan — Jordan's Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher said Monday that four drivers kidnapped in Iraq recently have been released.

Muasher told reporters that while the kidnappers had said all four were Jordanian, one was Sudanese. On Sunday, an Iraqi militant group calling itself the Shura Council of Fallujah Mujahideen said it had captured the four, claiming they were delivering tents to U.S. forces in Iraq, according to a tape broadcast in part on Al-Jazeera TV.

Militants wanted a 16-month insurgency have increasingly turned to kidnapping to force coalition forces and contractors from the country, while other kidnappings are purely for financial gain.

From The Associated Press

Iraqi officials: Tests show man in custody not Saddam deputy

BY MARIAM FAM

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Medical tests have proven that a man being held in Iraqi custody is not Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, the most wanted member of Saddam Hussein's ousted dictatorship, an Interior Ministry spokesman said Monday, ending days of conflicting claims about his purported arrest.

The required tests to identify him showed that he is not Izzat al-Douri," spokesman Sabah Kadhim told The Associated Press.

Kadhim said the man in Iraqi custody is a relative of al-Douri who was not an important member of Saddam's ousted regime but was nevertheless wanted by authorities.

Iraqi officials on Sunday said they had nabbed al-Douri during a shootout north of Baghdad, but

later in the day the Iraqi defense minister said word of his arrest was "baseless." U.S. military commanders had also been unable to confirm his arrest.

American officials believe that al-Douri — Saddam's former right-hand man — is playing an organizing role in the 16-month insurgency that has plagued U.S. forces here.

al-Douri was once the vice chairman of the Baath Party's Revolutionary Command Council and U.S. military officials believe he played an organizing role in the 16-month-old insurgency.

He is No. 6 on the U.S. military's list of 55 most-wanted figures from Saddam's regime — the king of clubs in the deck of cards — and U.S. forces have offered a \$10 million bounty for his arrest. Forty-four of the people on the list already have been killed or captured.

Saddam was arrested on Dec. 13, hiding in a tiny underground bunker near Adwar.



PHOTOS BY SETH ROBSON/Stars and Stripes

Above: Sgt. Mitch Dodson, 25, of the 2nd Infantry Division's Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, goes on patrol in Iraq. Left: One of the Manchus' Bradley fighting vehicles prepares for action across an area of operations in Iraq that covers 3,500 square miles of desert.

Strike Force Manchus keep supply route safe

2nd ID unit begins operations patrolling 3,500 square miles in Iraq

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

THE STRIKE FORCE Manchus are preparing to take control of roughly 3,500 square miles of desert — one of the largest areas of operations in Iraq.

The soldiers from 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, known as the Manchus because of their service in China during the Boxer Rebellion of 1901, began patrols in Iraq last week.

Strike Force, the 2nd ID's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, which includes the Manchus, has asked Stars and Stripes not to reveal the exact location of its units for security reasons.

However, the Manchus' commander, Lt. Col. Joseph Southcott, said 1-9's area of operations is a vast expanse of desert that does not include any large cities.

"We have small villages and towns, but no major urban areas. The biggest feature we have is a main supply route that bisects our area of operations," he said.

The Manchus' primary mission is to provide security and freedom of movement along the route, he said.

The unit responsible for security in the area over the past year has done an excellent job to minimize attacks on the road, he said.

"Prior to their mission, they had experienced a soldier being injured or a vehicle damaged every other day," he said. Now more than 100 days have passed without a successful attack, he added.

Insurgents have been forced away from the main supply route, according to military officials.

Their main form of attack now is to plant improvised explosive devices on side roads to target U.S. patrols, Southcott said.

The bespectacled commander experienced this up close on his first patrol in Iraq when an IED blasted the last Humvee in his convoy into a canal, injuring two Marines in a joint force, he said.

"For everybody in the patrol it was very instinctive. As soon as it happened there was no doubt what it was. You pull over, dismount, pull security, treat the wounded and search the area," he said.

Last Saturday night, several of Southcott's soldiers got their own chance to

check out the area, patrolling through a small village alongside another unit.

The soldiers rolled out in a convoy of Humvees, using night vision goggles to drive 50 mph along a dark six-lane freeway.

The vehicles stopped at an observation post overlooking the main supply route and the soldiers transferred to Bradley fighting vehicles.

When the Bradleys reached the drop-off point, ramps dropped and soldiers stepped into the landscape lit by a pale half-moon.

Instead of the desert that covers much of 1-9's area of operations, the soldiers could see thick vegetation including gum trees, palms, tall reeds and fields of native crops.

Farm animals disturbed by the visitors began a chorus of brays, moos and barks that announced their presence to the

neighborhood.

One of the veterans had some advice for the Manchus. "This isn't just a walk in the park," he said. "Make sure you are paying attention."

Another veteran advised the newcomers that the locals respect only strength. "We have killed so many insurgents they call this the blood patch," he said, pointing to his unit's insignia.

The patrol's first stop was the local mosque.

Houses lined both sides of the dirt road the soldiers walked down.

A baby cried in the yard next to one of them.

Locals sleep outdoors because it is cooler than sleeping indoors, explained a veteran.

The soldiers stopped outside the largest house in the village. Sgt. Mitch Dodson, 25, of Company C, 1-9, learned the house is home to the local sheik.

The young soldier from Elsmore, Kan., who has never met a sheik, did not get to meet one during the patrol. This sheik, who supports the coalition, was recovering after insurgents shot him, officials said.

Iraq is a pleasant change of scenery after a year and a half in South Korea, Dodson said.

"The terrain here is really flat and it is hot and dry. There are mountains and it is hot and humid in Korea," he said.

The soldiers cut across some fields and

stopped in a palm grove next to a canal full of weeds.

Among the palms stood a tree trunk, sheared of its branches, poking up like a ship's mast in the darkness.

A few months ago the tree was blown up by four 155 mm artillery rounds that shattered the front of a Humvee and threw the machine into the canal, injuring two soldiers, the veterans said.

This night's visit was meant to illustrate that IEDs are placed on isolated dirt tracks as well as the main roads.

Insurgents knew the soldiers patrolled there and waited for them, the veterans told the Manchus.

Further down the road, the soldiers stopped outside the local high school.

In the darkness it looked much like an American school, complete with a basketball court and graffiti.

The veterans have waged a war of words with locals who write anti-coalition graffiti.

The veterans responded with their own pro-coalition graffiti and eventually challenged their opponents to meet for a showdown.

Unfortunately, the soldiers got diverted to a raid and didn't make the appointment, they said.

Last stop was the local market, a collection of tin sheds by the roadside.

The shops had their shutters drawn when the soldiers arrived, but they are a popular hangout for locals during the day, the veterans said.

The soldiers finished the patrol by walking around the edge of a small lake to rendezvous with the Bradleys.

"We have been preparing for a long time. My soldiers are excited about getting into the area of operations and beginning to conduct our military operations in support of a stable and secure Iraq," he said.

E-mail Seth Robson at: robson@spjpress.osd.mil

*"For everybody
in the patrol
it was very instinctive.
As soon as it happened
there was no doubt
what it was. You pull
over, dismount,
pull security,
treat the wounded
and search the area."*

Lt. Col. Joseph Southcott

1-9 commander, on what happens
after a convoy vehicle is hit by an IED

Iraq boosts security at vulnerable oil fields

BY BASSEM MROUE

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's government is stepping up efforts to protect its vast and valuable oil infrastructure, hoping to reduce constant attacks that have deprived Iraq of much-needed reconstruction money.

Battered by constant sabotage, Iraq's Oil Ministry has deployed a new 14,000-member security force, has begun paying tribal leaders to guard pipelines and plans to double its fleet of reconnaissance aircraft, Oil Ministry spokesman Assim Jihad said Sunday.

Though similar measures have been tried in the past, efforts by oil officials to make pipelines more

secure have taken on a renewed urgency in recent weeks, in hopes of safeguarding revenue that makes up almost 95 percent of Iraq's budget.

Insurgents have repeatedly attacked pipelines in hopes of destabilizing the government and hampering reconstruction efforts.

No longer satisfied with spectacular attacks on major lines, militants have also hit smaller, less vital pipelines — a move that keeps oil workers constantly fighting to merely keep the fires out and retain the status quo.

Jihad said the Oil Ministry is currently paying 3 billion dinars (\$2.05 million) to protect pipelines in their areas. But even oil officials acknowledge they can do little with the vast tracts of uninhabited desert where many lines are attacked.

Fighting may hit Iraqi rebel areas before election, Gen. Metz says

BY JIM KRANE

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A U.S. assault on one or more of Iraq's three main "no-go" areas — including Fallujah — is likely in the next four months as the Iraqi government prepares to extend its control before January's elections, the U.S. land forces commander said on Sunday.

Army Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Metz's announcement came after a month where attacks on U.S. forces reached an average of almost 100 per day — the highest level since the end of major combat last year.

Metz, the No. 2 American military leader here, said Iraq's upcoming general election is the next major milestone for the United States in Iraq.

The U.S. military will work to regain control of rebel strongholds and turn them over to Iraq's fledgling security forces so elections will be seen by Iraqis — and the world — as free and fair.

"I don't think today you could hold elections," Metz said during an interview with three reporters at Multinational Corps headquarters near Baghdad International Airport. "But I do have about four months where I want to get to local control. And then I've got the rest of January to help the Iraqis to put the mechanisms in place."

A U.S. military offensive will be needed to bring the toughest places to heel in this California-sized country, Metz said. The rebel-held western city of Fallujah is the biggest military obstacle.

"It will take all lines of operation to get Fallujah under local control, which includes the security line of operation, which would require troops," Metz said.

The next biggest problem, in U.S. military terms, is Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad. Samarra also lies in guerrilla hands.

Metz believes the easiest of the three to re-establish control is Baghdad's Shiite Muslim slum of Sadr City. Parts of the neighborhood of 2 million remain the fiefdom of rebel cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, whose supporters have wired it with hidden bombs and booby traps, U.S. officials say.

Besides these centers of rebel-

lion, wide swaths of Iraq remain beyond government control and out of reach of elections. These include Sunni Muslim areas north and west of Baghdad and, perhaps, southern Shiite cities like Basra, where rebellious sections resist U.S. or British troops. Assaults to retake these areas could be done one after another or simultaneously, Metz said. He said one or more might be solved

through negotiations, with leaders warned that their cities face a devastating U.S. offensive if the insurgents don't stand down.

"If you're a leader in a town ... do you want to have to go rebuild it because it got destroyed, because foreign fighters came to hang out in your city? They can help us make these decisions," Metz said.

The general said the Americans' August siege of Najaf could be considered a model for subduing rebel-held areas.

U.S. and Iraqi officials consider the three-week battle in the Shiite holy city a success, although it left Najaf in ruins with hundreds of Iraqi fighters and civilians dead and nine Americans killed. Al-Sadr's defeated militia fled the city and it is now under government control. Efforts to rebuild Najaf are under way.

Last week, a top U.S. civilian official here told the New York Times that elections could be viewed as legitimate with participation of 15 major cities and towns, along with the northern Kurdish region. Such a proposal could leave vast chunks of Iraq outside the democratic process.

The vote is a massive undertaking. Some 10 million eligible voters need to be registered and around 9,000 polling places across the country must be set up and protected. Candidates, who have yet to begin campaigning, need to be able to move across Iraq.

Metz said the U.S. military would help in creating conditions for the vote to go forward — subduing rebel areas and offering intelligence and backup security for polling — but would stay clear of the vote itself.



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Senator: Franks too of forces shift

Graham says general talked of troops moving into position for Iraq war

BY WILLIAM C. MANN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A former Senate Intelligence Committee chairman asserted Sunday that the general who ran the war in Afghanistan said more than a year before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq that his resources were being shifted in preparation for taking on Saddam Hussein.

Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla., contends that just months into combat in Afghanistan, Gen. Tommy Franks also told him that fighting terrorism in Somalia, Yemen and elsewhere should take priority over invading Iraq.

Graham said Franks told him he thought the United States knew less about the situation in Iraq than that some European governments, and the Bush administration should ask them for advice.

The senator, who is retiring at year's end, said his conversation with the now-retired general came in February 2002, when Graham was chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

That was the month that Secretary of State Colin Powell told a House committee that President Bush was considering "the most serious set of options one might imagine" to bring "regime change" in Iraq, including the possibility of doing it alone. At least



Former Senate Intelligence Committee chairman Sen. Bob Graham, D-Fla., appears Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press."

one European leader, German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, said a few days later that Bush had assured him "he harbors no attack plans."

The invasion began March 19, 2003, over the vigorous protests of Germany and most other major U.S. allies except Britain, which joined the invading force. Graham opposed the war.

Graham said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that his meeting with Franks was at the general's head-

"First, we should win the war in Afghanistan. Second, move to Somalia, which as he described was almost anarchy but with a substantial number of al-Qaida cells; then to Yemen."

Sen. Bob Graham

Detailing what Gen. Tommy Franks told him about the strategy for the war on terror

quarters, Central Command in Tampa, Fla.

"He laid out a very precise strategy for fighting the war on terror," Graham said.

"First, we should win the war in Afghanistan. Second, move to Somalia, which as he described was almost anarchy but with a substantial number of al-Qaida cells; then to Yemen. And that we should be very careful about Iraq, because our intelligence was so weak that we didn't know what

we were getting into," Graham said.

Last week, Franks gave fellow Texan Bush a rousing endorsement in a speech at the Republican National Convention. Franks said he had seen in Bush's eyes "the courage to stand up to terrorists and the consistency necessary to beat them."

In "American Soldier," Franks' memoirs published last month, he mentioned none of the points Graham reported in his book. The retired general could not be reached Sunday. There was no immediate response to a message left at Tampa's Central Command headquarters.

Graham wrote of his meeting with Franks in a book, "Intelligence Matters," which goes on sale Tuesday.

On an expert read on "Meet the Press," the senator said Franks told him "his men and resources were being moved to Iraq, where he felt that our intelligence was shoddy. This admission was coming almost 14 months before the beginning of combat operations in Iraq and only five months after the commencement of combat in Afghanistan."

Graham alleges in his book that the White House stood in the way of a controversial investigation that he wanted to look into purported ties between the Sept. 11 hijackers and the Saudi government.

Donor's conference

TOKYO — Japan, a major contributor of aid to Iraq, is planning to host a donors' conference for Iraqi reconstruction as early as next month, a government spokesman said Monday.

Tokyo already has pledged \$5 billion through 2007 for humanitarian assistance and rebuilding in postwar Iraq, the second-highest amount after the United States.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said Tokyo's large aid pledge made Japan an appropriate site for a donor conference.

"We are making arrangements to host the conference as early as October," Hosoda told a news conference. He didn't offer any other details.

Foreign Ministry officials said it was too early to say how many countries plan to send envoys.

Standoff in Najaf

NAJAF, Iraq — Dozens of Iraqi national guardsmen surrounded the offices of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in the holy city of Najaf on Monday, but backed off amid pressure from Iraq's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, and witnesses said.

Troops closing in on Al-Sadr's offices in a small alley in Najaf's Old City met stiff resistance from scores of Al-Sadr supporters — apparently unarmed — who demanded they present a search warrant. A tense standoff ensued with neither side willing to give in.

Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most respected Shiite cleric, however, intervened and summoned al-Sadr and Najaf's governor to his office to discuss the issue.

Details of the talks were not revealed, but the guardsmen were later seen pulling out.

"The meeting was the result of the irresponsible behavior around the offices," said Sheikh Raed al-Kadhimi, al-Sadr's spokesman.

Gas line targeted

KIRKUK, Iraq — Saboteurs targeted a natural gas pipeline in northern Iraq on Monday, an act that could affect power in several cities, a police officer said.

The pipeline connects the Janoub fields with the Beiji Electricity station some 45 miles to the south, said Col. Mohammed Ahmad from the Oil Protection Police. The Janoub fields are 12 miles south of Kirkuk.

Firefighters were able to extinguish the fire about half an hour after it started, he said. He added that experts from the company will replace the damaged pipeline by a new one within a day.

The Beiji Electricity Station could generate up to 400 megawatts a day and supplies the northern cities of Mosul, Kirkuk and Tikrit, with power, Ahmad said.

From The Associated Press

Kuwait alarmed extremists are recruiting teenagers to fight U.S.-led coalition in Iraq

BY DIANA ELIAS

The Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — Every Friday, 17-year-old Dhari al-Zahamei's family would wait for him to come back from the mosque so they could have lunch together. Then one day the young al-Zahamei didn't come home, instead sending word he had gone to fight in the jihad, or holy war.

The teenager did not say where he was headed, but his father, Othman al-Zahamei, found out the boy had taken a flight to Syria that day — April 30 — with a friend of about the same age. The final destination was not difficult to figure out: Iraq.

The elder al-Zahamei said he made several fruitless trips to Syria to search for his son. Then, in mid-July, Dhari, his only friend and two other Kuwaitis — one also a teenager — were sent home from Syria.

The Kuwait government said they had been accused of trying to enter Iraq illegally, the first official acknowledgment that citizens of this U.S. ally were taking up arms against American troops in Iraq.

It was something of a shock because this small oil-rich state owes its 1991 liberation

from a seven-month Iraqi occupation to a U.S.-led coalition and Kuwait was the launch pad for the war that toppled Saddam Hussein last year. Just as upsetting was that apparently many of those recruited by Kuwaiti extremists to fight in Iraq are teenagers.

One Kuwaiti security official said Muslim radicals are recruiting teens because they are too young to remember Saddam's 1990 occupation of Kuwait and so have no qualms about fighting their country's liberators in Iraq.

Upon their return to Kuwait, al-Zahamei and his three comrades were detained by Kuwaiti security officers, and information from their interrogations led to the arrest of 14 extremists suspected of recruiting them or preparing for terrorist attacks here.

The teenager remains under investigation and could face up to two years in juvenile detention if he is convicted of leaving the country to fight Americans, said his lawyer, Abdullah al-Otaibi.

Osama al-Manaver, a lawyer who represents Islamic fundamentalists, said dozens of Kuwaitis seeking to join Iraq's insurgents have entered the country through Syria, Iran and Turkey, avoiding Kuwait's own tightly controlled frontier.

For more than a decade this Gulf emirate has been gripped by a struggle between liberals who want more freedoms and a stronger democracy and Muslim fundamentalists who favor full implementation of sharia, or Islamic law.

Westernized liberals, while conceding the fundamentalists are well-organized, say their rivals are able to have more influence than their numbers would suggest because the majority of Kuwaitis play no active role in politics.

The recruiting of the teenage al-Zahamei has sounded an alarm that the country's youth is in danger of being brainwashed.

The minister of endowments and Islamic affairs, Abdullah al-Matrouf, recently said that the matter "should not be taken lightly," though he insisted extremists are a small minority in Kuwait.

Islamic Web sites, videotapes and CD-ROMs popular with young Muslims call foreign forces in Iraq "crusaders" and "barbarian thieves" and refer to the Muslims who die fighting them "martyrs."

The videos and CD-ROMs are not publicly sold, but are circulated in Islamic centers. Authorities have not blocked most militant Web sites that are "very popular" among the young, according to al-Otaibi, the lawyer representing al-Zahamei.

The elder al-Zahamei said his son, whom he has visited twice in detention, realized he made a mistake.

"He told me, 'I was tricked and they made me see myself in paradise with the maid-'

Some Muslims believe they will go to paradise to be served by 70 virgins if they die defending God and their honor.

One Kuwaiti security official said Muslim radicals are recruiting teens because they are too young to remember Saddam's 1990 occupation of Kuwait and so have no qualms about fighting their country's liberators in Iraq.

Pilot burden blamed for fatal Kosovo crash

Warrant officer training in unfamiliar terrain when helicopter went down

By STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

WÜRZBURG, Germany — The pilots of an AH-64 Apache helicopter were flying too low over unfamiliar terrain at night when they crashed into a thick cable strung between two hills in Kosovo, according to an Army investigative report on the June 8, 2003, accident.

The fiery crash of aircraft No. 473 near Novo Brdo, 12 miles north of Gnjane, killed the two pilots from Company C of the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Andrew Robbins and Warrant Officer 1 Devon DeSouza.

The investigative team, led by Maj. Shawn Allen of the headquarters of the 1st ID's aviation brigade, attributed the accident in part to the too-heavy burden placed on Robbins, the senior pilot.

Robbins had been charged with training his brand-new co-pilot while carrying out a long, complex mission at night while flying a route he didn't know.

In the clinical language of the investigation's list of findings, the report said the pilots' chain of command had "allowed [Robbins] to bear a high level of training burden, which ultimately exceeded [his] ability to manage mission risk and avoid known man-made hazards to terrain flight."

In short, he was too busy and made a fatal mistake.

Experienced pilot

Robbins, 41, had been one of the battalion's most experienced pilots. He had flown Army helicopters since 1986 and was the company's standardization and instructor pilot — the teacher for all the other pilots in the unit. He had racked up more than 2,800 hours flying helicopters, more than half of them in Apaches.

"He was more than just competent," his friend and fellow Apache pilot, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sean McNulty, told Stars and Stripes six weeks after the crash. "When you flew with him, you knew you were going to learn something."

That is part of the reason why he had been paired with DeSouza, 29, a former Marine who was one of 1-1 Aviation's newest pilots. Fresh out of training, he had



Stars and Stripes

flown just 56½ hours in Apaches, including his training.

Since arriving in Kosovo in early May, DeSouza had flown only about 10 hours. There was no record he had ever taken a required "local area orientation" flight, according to the report. He had logged only two hours using night-vision systems, and none in the previous 22 days.

The report said Robbins, "by virtue of [DeSouza's] inexperience, assumed a high cockpit workload" on the point, naming that it took place in the final one-third of the duty day and the final 30 minutes of the flight.

According to transcripts of sworn statements by the two pilots of the second Apache (their names, like all names in the report except those of the deceased pilots, were removed from the report by an Army censor), the two helicopters took off from Camp Bondsteel about 9:20 p.m. on what one pilot described as "a clear night with perfect weather." Their mission was to fly over and videotape 20 locations of interest in the American zone of Kosovo. No. 473 flew in front, the second aircraft, No. 470, trailed.

Earlier, during daylight, another team had flown the same route. They briefed the night pilots on possible hazards, but neither Robbins nor DeSouza had ever flown it before.

Near Novo Brdo, the day pilots had noted twin towers on two adjacent hills, apparently part of a local mining operation. Several wires stretched between the towers, and an ore bucket one of the pilots described as looking like a gondola hung from one. He later told investigators he had warned DeSouza about them, and watched the young pilot mark them on his map.

Robbins, DeSouza and the two other pilots finished filming tar-

gets south of Bondsteel, then refueled at the base and headed north. After flying over Novo Brdo, the two Apaches headed to the next target.

As they headed into a hilly, wooded area about 1:15 a.m., Robbins and DeSouza banked left, with No. 470 about 10 rotor lengths behind. Suddenly, one of the trail pilots saw a plume of light through his night-vision goggles. The other saw pieces of debris fly toward him and the lead aircraft plunged to the ground.

The trail aircraft quickly rose to a safe height and tried to raise No. 473 on the radio. Then they called a ground team from the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment as well as crash/rescue and medical evacuation teams.

“[Chief Warrant Officer 3 Andrew Robbins] was more than just competent. When you flew with him, you knew you were going to learn something.”

Chief Warrant Officer 3

Sean McNulty

Apache pilot

It was too late. The lead Apache fell onto a dirt road and erupted into flames, its ammunition exploding. A fire truck left Camp Monteith at 2:20 a.m. and reached the scene 53 minutes later, according to an Army Criminal Investigative Division report. Firefighters doused the flames with 2,000 gallons of water.

Flying too low

As the unit grieved and the families buried their dead, investigators reviewed flight documents and interviewed other pilots.

In their sworn statement, the pilots of the trail aircraft denied dropping below the minimum altitude of 300 feet during the flight.

But Allen reviewed the video in No. 470's onboard camera. It captured Robbins and DeSouza's aircraft during the first 65 minutes

of the flight as well as the post-crash fire, but not the crash itself. The video showed No. 473 had flown too low at least three times during that hour, once as low as about 160 feet.

Allen measured the height of the four wires, and the highest was 238 feet. The hanging ore bucket lay on the ground near the wreckage.

The sworn statements of 1-1 Aviation pilots showed a unit stretched to its limits. The 1st Infantry Division's scheduled year-long peacekeeping tour had been extended by three months because of the demands of the Iraq war. Its three six-aircraft Apache companies rotated through Kosovo for intense three-month tours.

One pilot told investigators there simply weren't enough crews to allow pilots to fly both daytime reconnaissance and nighttime missions and still get their proper crew rest.

Allen completed his investigation, called a "collateral report," later that month. After a review by the division's senior leadership, it was cleared for public release last October. But a request for the document by Stars and Stripes to the division's public affairs office made last August went unanswered, apparently lost as 1st ID prepared for its deployment to Iraq.

The request was renewed through V Corps in May and released by the division's Staff Judge Advocate in mid-June.

Allen's report made several recommendations to 4th Brigade leaders, including enforcement of the 300-foot minimum altitude, requiring an orientation flight for pilots new to Kosovo, limiting the number of targets on a given flight, and barring pilots without experience on night-vision systems from flying on real-world missions.

The unit had only a few weeks to implement them. Company C returned from Kosovo July 24, approaching its home field of Katterbach, Germany, in the traditional "missing man" formation. Before they left, they held a ceremony renaming the airfield at Camp Bondsteel in memory of Robbins and DeSouza.

"We missed them on the way home," Capt. E.J. Irvin, Company C's commander, said in a short welcome-home speech at the time. "We felt them with us in the cockpit. They were there in spirit."

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The investigation

The investigative team, headed by Maj. Shawn Allen of the 1st Infantry Division's 4th Brigade headquarters staff, issued a series of "findings" and "recommendations" following an investigation into the fatal crash of an AH-64 Apache near Novo Brdo, Kosovo, on June 8, 2003. They included:

Findings

■ The aircraft crashed after striking cables that were less than 300 feet above the ground, the minimum altitude for en-route flight in Kosovo. The crashed aircraft descended below 300 feet at least three other times during the flight.

■ The co-pilot ground, Warrant Officer 1 Devon DeSouza, had not received a mandatory "local area orientation" briefing, which focuses on terrain hazards, between his arrival in Kosovo and the crash.

■ Pilots flying the route during the day had failed to pass along critical information about en-route hazards to the night crew.

■ DeSouza had almost no experience flying under night-vision systems at the time of the crash.

■ The mission assigned was too much for one two-aircraft team to accomplish.

■ The pilot-in-command, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Andrew Robbins, had too much burden in being required to simultaneously train DeSouza and carry out a complex, intense mission.

■ The pilots relied too heavily on Global Positioning Systems and not enough on maps with marked hazards.

Recommendations

■ Take "command action" to prevent pilots from flying below the 300-foot minimum altitude.

■ Require a "local area orientation" flight for all newly assigned aviators in Kosovo.

■ Comply with guidelines requiring a daytime reconnaissance flight and a formal debriefing session before a night mission.

■ Bar aviators with no experience using night-vision systems in Kosovo from flying on operational missions.

■ Limit "must-have" reconnaissance targets to six per 2½-hour fuel load.

Source: Paraphrased from Collateral Investigation, AH-64 Apache Aircraft #9700473, Crash at Novo Brdo, Kosovo, 8 June 2003.

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Wallets get boost from misused gas coupons

Naples regularly warns of penalties for selling, trading discount coupons for goods and services

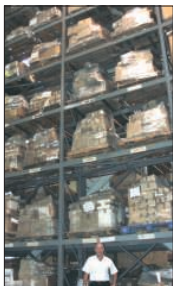
BY KENDRA HELMER
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — Drivers who fuel up at gasoline stations in the Naples area sometimes roll away with pumped-up wallets, despite rising fuel costs.

By illegally selling and trading discount gas coupons for goods and services, some sailors and Defense Department civilians say they can double what they pay for the coupons.

The difficulty in tracking down those abusing the gas coupon system make it impossible to determine the extent of the misuse, officials say.

But it is enough of an issue that the base uses the base newspaper, newcomer orientation classes and ads on Defense Forces Network to regularly warn personnel about penalties for misusing their coupons.



Frances Aievoli, supervisor of storage at Capodichino in Naples, Italy, is dwarfed by high shelves containing boxes of used gas coupons.

"To deter it is a problem," said the base commander, Capt. Dave Frederick. "But what to do [for punishment] is not a problem."

Frederick said that the misuse does occur, and said he has revoked people's privileges for it.

Frederick has personally seen misuse. He said that once while he was jogging past a gas station not authorized to take coupons, he saw a woman with military plates fueling up. When he saw her pay with coupons, he got her license plate number, called her sponsor and revoked her privileges.

Selling the coupons for a profit is easy to do, according to people interviewed by Stars and Stripes.

In fact, some gas stations in this southern Italian city are known for their aggressive attendants who eagerly inquire, "Sell coupons?" when they spot an American at the pump.

Their eagerness is fueled by the fact that eligible U.S. and NATO personnel do not pay tax on gas. The coupons cost about 52 cents a liter, while Italians pay about 1.20 euros (about \$1.45) a liter for gas.

"It's a very sensitive program indeed because ... we have an enormous savings made by personnel," said Bart DiMuccio, tax-free office administrator at the Capodichino base in Naples, which oversees the coupon program for U.S. and NATO commands in all of Italy, including Sardinia and Sicily.

From October 2003 to September 2004, coupons for 98.5 million liters were printed. Military personnel save up to \$90 million a year with the program, he said.

"We have an excellent relationship with the Italian ministries of defense and finance," DiMuccio said. "We must make sure this program is crystal clear, we must

make sure everything is done by the book."

A driver is supposed to use the coupons at Agip and Esso gas stations, filling in the signature, date and license plate in front of the attendant.

"The gas station attendant should ask for ID," DiMuccio said.

But of more than 20 people interviewed, including several who have lived in Naples for years, none had ever been asked for identification, and several admitted to leaving the coupons blank.

And while some say the risk isn't worth it, others readily admit to making a profit off their coupons.

Many steered clear of talking about such misuse — and not just because they risk losing their privileges.

"Don't do a story," several grumbled, expressing fear that officials may try to crack down on what they see as a way to supplement their income.

Moneymaking scheme

Rather than haggle with unknown attendants who drive a hard bargain, several personnel looking to sell coupons say they just go to Italians they know and trust. None of the sellers would agree to be identified for fear of punishment.

Some say they get 85 euro cents per liter, while others get as high as 1 euro per liter, a profit of 68 U.S. cents per liter.

Getting euros for the coupons isn't the only way people cash in. Some off-base mechanics, eager to save money on gasoline, offer their services in exchange for coupons.

One petty officer said repairs to his car were going to cost 400 euros (about \$480), so he gave the



PHOTOS BY KENDRA HELMER/Stars and Stripes

Sandra Sambri, a tax-free clerk at Capodichino in Naples, Italy, checks gas coupons to see if they have signatures. Used gas coupons are returned to the tax-free office on base, where employees check them to ensure they are filled out.

mechanic 400 liters of gas coupons, for which he had paid \$208. The sailor saved \$272.

One government worker said he sells his leftover coupons for 1 euro per liter.

"I know I'm not supposed to do it, but if you're allowing me 400 liters and I don't use it, shouldn't I be entitled to do what I choose to do with it?" the worker said. "Once it's mine, whose business is it?"

"There is a fine line between being illegal and being business," several sources said they weren't worried about getting caught.

"There is no way to trace it," one man said.

Tracking coupons

That's not true, DiMuccio said. Each coupon's serial number can be traced to the purchaser. If misuse is suspected, his office calls the person.

Personnel also are encouraged

to alert the office of suspected abuse of the system.

"If there's any suspicion that some Agip or Esso gas station is doing anything wrong, we will immediately call the contractor," DiMuccio said.

Personnel don't stake out gas stations to catch people in the act. Rather, DiMuccio said the office, which employs five people, randomly samples as much as 80 percent of coupons to see if they are correctly filled out.

Another red flag of possible misuse would be if someone turns into a gas station a 100-liter book of coupons in one day.

The tax-free office receives the coupons from the central Agip and Esso offices in Rome, where all gas stations send their coupons after stamping them. The tax-free workers check to see if the coupons have been filled out by the owner and stamped by the gas station.

The office also calls people if their coupons aren't filled out "to make sure nothing is illegal," DiMuccio said.

While several coupon users said they never fill them out, DiMuccio said, "A very high percentage sign them."

DiMuccio said of 41,928 gas coupons his office recently checked, about 15 coupons weren't signed and about 10 had no license number.

If there is a suspicious case, the tax-free office sends that information to the appropriate authorities, such as the person's chain of command, DiMuccio said.

Sometimes the command asks his office to investigate further, which may involve looking at an individual's coupon use over the past year.

In the last year, the office has investigated four suspicious cases, and in an average year may investigate anywhere from a half-dozen to 12 people.

"We have not had big problems of misuse," DiMuccio said.

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IN THE WORLD

Schroeder: Welfare cutbacks will go on

BY TONY CZUJKA
The Associated Press

BERLIN — Chancellor Gerhard Schröder insisted on Monday that there was no turning back in cutting social programs despite pressure to reverse the unpopular measures after his party suffered a rout in a German state election.

Schröder's Social Democrats lost 45 percent of their voter support Sunday in the small western state of Saarland, while the conservative Christian Democrats — the main opposition party at the national level — retained control of the local legislature and the governor's post.

Schröder said Monday he "would have wished for a better result." But in a speech to labor leaders, he said "We need to recognize the necessity of reforms," he said.

Schröder has staked his political future on the reforms, which he says are needed to boost Europe's largest economy, reduce debt and fight unemployment. But the latest electoral defeat reignited criticism of his course inside his party and among labor unions.

Omar Schreiner, a Social Democrat lawmaker from Saarland state, called on the government to reverse trims in health care, jobless benefits and other social programs begun by Schröder last year. He urged the government to stop a planned Jan. 1 tax cut and wage up subsidies for low-pump jobs.

"These changes for the worse have to be reversed," Schreiner told the Berliner Zeitung daily.

In Sunday's vote, support for the Social Democrats plunged to 30.8 percent from 44.4 percent in the last Saarland election in 1999, the state's most showing in the state since 1960.

Those capitalizing on the backlash included the small far-right National Democratic Party, which came out of nowhere to win 4 percent of the vote with a platform opposed to Schröder's welfare-state cuts.

The centrist, pro-business Free Democrats re-entered the Saarland state parliament after a 10-year absence, just crossing the 5 percent hurdle for parliamentary seats.

Christian Democratic national leader Angela Merkel, widely tipped as Schröder's challenger in 2006, called the result "sensational" and "a good omen" for upcoming state and federal elections this month. Her party won more than 47.5 percent of the vote, a gain of two percentage points.

It was just the latest in a series of state election defeats for the Social Democrats since Schröder won re-election two years ago.

In elections to the European Parliament in June, the Social Democrats had their worst showing in a national ballot since World War II.



AP photos

Above left: A relative of Madina Tamayeva, 10, killed with her mother in the school hostage siege, weeps Monday during Tamayeva's funeral in Beslan, Russia. Above right: Men carry a coffin at Monday's funeral.

Russians mourn carnage

Officials say terrorists had well-planned attack; government criticized for insufficient protection

BY MIKE ECKEL
The Associated Press

BESLAN, Russia — Trains passing a cemetery blew their horns in respect Monday as Russia mourned the hundreds of victims of what increasingly appeared to have been a well-planned terrorist attack on a southern school. State television sharply criticized government officials for understating the scope of the crisis.

Residents of Beslan crowded around the coffins of children, parents, grandparents and teachers ahead of 120 scheduled burials during the first of two national days of mourning in Russia, which has seen more than 400 people killed in violence linked to terrorism in the past two weeks.

Other desperate families searched for the missing from the siege at School No. 1, which began Wednesday and ended Friday in explosions and shooting.

The official death toll stood Monday at 335, plus 30 attackers, who had been heavily armed with weap-

ons and explosives and had reportedly demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya.

A Russian prosecutor said the hostage-takers belonged to a cell formed by radical Chechen rebel leader Shamil Basayev, the Interfax news agency reported.

Mikhail Lapotnikov, a senior investigator in the North Caucasus prosecutors' office, said the investigation had established that the group had taken part in a June attack targeting police and security officials in the neighboring republic of Ingushetia that killed 88 people, Interfax said.

"At such moments, society needs the truth," Rossiya television commentator Sergei Brilyov said Sunday night. Brilyov blamed the "system of administration" where "everything hangs on the bravery of the rank and file, but generals can't bring themselves to act until the president throws ideas to them." On Saturday, President Vladimir Putin had criticized Russia's law enforcement agencies for failing to rise to the challenge of terrorism.

The Federal Security Service chief in North Ossetia, Valery Antreyev, said investigators were looking into whether militants had smuggled the explosives and weapons into the school and hidden them during summer renovations.

Among the first to be buried in Beslan were Zinaida Kudziyeva, 42, and her 10-year-old daughter, Madina Tamayeva. Relatives said the two had tried to flee the school when the first explosions went off and found themselves in the line of fire between the militants and Russian forces.

Most people in Beslan, a town of 30,000 inhabitants had a relative, friend or neighbor killed or wounded. As of Sunday, around 100 people were unaccounted for, the Interior Ministry said. Many of the dead have not been identified, with some bodies charred beyond recognition.

A plane delivered antibiotics, bandages and other medical supplies from Italy on Sunday, and two U.S. transport planes delivered aid Monday.

Experts: More talks needed on Turkey's entry into EU

BY ROBERT WIELAARD
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Former senior European officials warned Monday EU membership talks with Turkey may upset public opinion in several European Union nations yet recommended they start quickly if the EU's head office gives them the green light at the end of the year.

To help smooth its entry, they urged EU governments — and Ankara — to dispel nightmare scenarios that Turkey would be a free-loader, spilling waves of poor, uneducated Turks westward in search of jobs and a better future.

The panel, led by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, issued a largely upbeat assessment of Turkish EU membership, saying the country's accession will be significantly less painful than many believe if Ankara keeps up its democratic and other reforms.

Turkey has a "European vocation" making it "fundamentally different" from the EU's other Muslim neighbors, said the report written by the panel, which also included a former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard, former Spanish foreign minister Marcelino Oreja and two former EU commissioners, Emma Bonino and Hans van den Bruck.

The country has made "unprecedented reforms," the report said, adding that by opening membership negotiations, the EU will effectively force Turkish leaders to continue with the "far-reaching transformation" of their country's society.

"That pressure is necessary because of the latent resistance to such profound changes in many parts of Turkish society," the report said.

The panel also cautioned membership talks may alienate public opinion in France, Austria, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, which have Turkish minorities and significant public opposition to Turkey in the union.

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Pakistan says it has no info on bin Laden

Plays down U.S. official's remark on progress

BY MUNIR AHMAD

The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan on Monday played down comments by a top U.S. counterterrorism official that progress has been made recently in the hunt for Osama bin Laden.

Information Minister Shaikh Rashid Ahmed described the remarks by J. Cofer Black — the U.S. State Department coordinator for counterterrorism who visited Pakistan last week — as a “political statement.”

“We don’t have any information about bin Laden,” Ahmed said. He refused to elaborate on what he meant by “political.”

In an interview Saturday, Black referred to bin Laden, saying, “If he has a watch, he should be looking at it because the clock is ticking. He will be caught.”

Asked if concrete progress had

been made in the hunt for the al-Qaida leader during the last two months — when Pakistan has arrested dozens of terror suspects, including some key al-Qaida operatives — Black said, “Yes, I would say this.”

Ahmed said Black “may have this information, but we do not have any such thing.”

Pakistan is a key ally of the United States in its war on terror, and during Black’s visit, Pakistan asked Washington to provide more helicopters and surveillance equipment to help it capture or eliminate al-Qaida suspects near the Afghan border.

Black hailed Pakistan’s counterterrorism efforts. His visit came weeks after Pakistani authorities captured Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, a Tanzanian wanted in the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in east Africa, and Mohammed Naem Noor Khan, a Pakistani

Pakistanis plan anti-U.S. rallies on Sept. 11

The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — A coalition of radical Pakistani Islamic groups plans to stage rallies on the third anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States to condemn Washington for “creating anarchy” in the world, an official said Monday.

“We want to convince people that peace is becoming difficult in the world because of American policies after the Sept. 11 attacks,” said Shahid Shamsi, a spokesman for the Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal, or United Action Forum, opposition coalition. “The rallies will be staged with reference to the Sept. 11 attacks because (the American atti-

tude is creating further anarchy in the world,” Shamsi said.

The MMA has an influential bloc of lawmakers in Pakistan’s Parliament. It opposed the war that ousted the Taliban regime in neighboring Afghanistan and President Gen. Pervez Musharraf’s support of the U.S.-led war on terrorism. It also has condemned the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Shamsi said plans for the rallies, to be held across the country, were still being worked out and would not estimate how many people would take part. Previous MMA rallies have drawn thousands in cities around Pakistan, particularly Karachi. About 3,000 people were killed in the 2001 attacks in New York and Washington.

computer expert allegedly linked to al-Qaida operatives around the world.

Since then, Pakistan has reported the arrests of dozens of local and foreign terror suspects, but officials haven’t said they are close to capturing bin Laden and his top associate, Ayman al-Zawahiri, be-

lieved to be hiding in the rugged tribal regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

“During the interaction with us, Joseph Cofer Black did not share any information with us about any possible hide-outs of Osama,” said a senior Pakistani security official.

“We cannot say that we are

close to capturing him,” said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Pakistan has deployed about 70,000 troops along the Afghan border and conducted several military operations this year against remnants of al-Qaida and their local supporters.

Serbs resume trial of alleged assassin

BY KATARINA KRATOVAČ

The Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia—Montenegro — The chief suspect in the slaying of Serbia’s first democratic prime minister since World War II returned to court Monday after a nearly two-month break in the hearings.

Milorad Lukovic — the accused ringleader of the March 2003 assassination of Zoran Djindjic — has denied any role in the assassination.

Judges on Monday dismissed a request to postpone the hearings again to wait for the extradition of another ranking suspect in the criminal group charged with plotting the assassination.

Judge Marko Kljajevic said there were “no legal foundations” to postpone the procedures until that suspect, Dejan Milenkovic, is extradited.

Milenkovic was arrested in the Greek port of Thessaloniki on July 15. Greece has agreed to hand him over.

Lukovic, along with Milenkovic and 11 other associates, was charged with killing Djindjic in an attempt to return allies of Slobodan Milosevic to power, two years after the autocratic former president was extradited to The Hague, Netherlands. Milosevic is on trial before the U.N. war crimes tribunal for his alleged role in 1990s Balkan atrocities.



Actress Reese Witherspoon attends the 61st Venice Film Festival in Italy on Sunday, while presenting her latest movie, “Vanity Fair.”

‘Vanity Fair’ vies for top Venice Film Festival title

BY TOM RACHMAN

The Associated Press

VENICE, Italy — “Vanity Fair” gave Reese Witherspoon a chance to buck the on-screen custom of portraying 19th-century women as corset-restrained ornaments, with the actress describing her willful and ambitious character as a prototype for modern feminism.

The movie — adapted from William Makepeace Thackeray’s novel — was the first of three American movies competing for best picture at the Venice Film Festival. At a press preview Sunday, the film was applauded but did not receive the rancous

cheers that often hint at a potential winner.

“Vanity Fair” tells the story of Becky Sharp, a girl from the gutters who built her way upward in class-conscious British society despite monumental scorn. The character has sometimes been described as an unscrupulous social climber, but director Mira Nair’s film depicts her far more sympathetically.

“Becky Sharp was sort of an early feminist,” Witherspoon said. “Now we think of ambitious women all the time. We see politicians, and actors and actresses — different people making their way in society... I do think she’s one of the early, early prototypes for feminism in literature.”

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IN THE STATES

Frances strikes Fla. again

Storm pummels Panhandle; four die as 6 million lose electricity

BY DAVID ROYSE
The Associated Press

PANACEA, Fla. — Tropical Storm Frances plowed ashore on the Florida Panhandle on Monday, its second U.S. landfall after spreading a trail of flooding and torn roofs across the center of the state. About 6 million people lost power and at least four people were killed.

After crossing part of the Gulf of Mexico, Frances' center hit land at about 2 p.m. some 20 miles south of Tallahassee with top sustained winds near 65 mph, the National Hurricane Center said. The storm was moving north-northwest at about 8 mph, and was not expected to regain hurricane strength, forecasters said.

As northern Florida residents dealt with Frances, residents in hard-hit areas braced the arduous task of cleaning up.

More than 13 inches of rain had fallen along Florida's central east coast, flooding some areas 4 feet deep, before Frances finished crossing the state and entered the Gulf of Mexico late Sunday.

In its wake, boats and mobile homes were mangled, and trees and power lines had been toppled.

State officials urged people to stay where they were because of the possibility of flooding and the difficulty of finding service stations still in operation.

"Our message is turn around, don't drown. If you do not have to travel, don't do so," state meteorologist Ben Nelson said Monday, warning of possible storm surges of up to 10 feet. Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings said officials were working to get fuel from reopened ports to emergency workers and gas stations.

Not everyone heeded the warning, even as rain began falling heavily Monday in the Panhandle. Tamara Suarez decided to open the Cafe Con Leche in the historic fishing and oyster village of Apalachicola because "it's better to be here than at home, just waiting and waiting."

In the Miami area, which was spared the worst of the storm, businesses started to pull down shutters and reopen. Cruise ships packed the Port of Miami after being stalled out at sea during the storm. On Ocean Drive in Miami Beach, hotels and bars welcomed the few tourists and residents who ventured out.

"I think we're going to have a lot of people who were cooped up and want to have a drink," said Mike Pina, general manager of the Cleveland Hotel.

Airports in Fort Lauderdale, Martin County, Miami, Palm



A Hillsborough County Sheriff's deputy stops a car after it drove under a downed tree and power lines Monday in Valrico, Fla.

Hurricane Ivan building in Atlantic

MIAMI — Even as Frances battered Florida, another hurricane formed Sunday in the central Atlantic and quickly strengthened with a potential for following a path similar of Frances.

"You might want to be smart about whether you take down your shutters," Miami-Dade County Manager George Burgess said Sunday at a briefing on the aftermath of Frances.

Hurricane Ivan had sustained winds of 135 mph, advancing quickly from a tropical storm to a Category 4 storm, the National Hurricane Center said. It was about 700 miles east-southeast of Barbados, too far away to tell with any certainty whether it would hit the continental United States, the hurricane center said.

The storm was due to reach Barbados by Tuesday and could strengthen to a Category 5 storm, the most powerful, drawing power from hundreds of square miles of warm tropical water.

The center's five-day forecast suggested a potential path across the Antilles and Hispaniola, with the storm possibly reaching Cuba on Friday.

From The Associated Press

Beach, Orlando and Tampa reopened, but Tallahassee International Airport was closed.

Northbound Interstate 95 was partially reopened in Palm Beach County after a section of the major highway along Florida's east coast was washed out. In the Tampa-St. Petersburg area, authorities closed the Sunshine Skyway Bridge across Tampa Bay because of high wind.

After passing through the Panhandle, Frances will move into Georgia and Alabama. Radar showed rain already spreading into southern Georgia and parts of South Carolina, and the storm's effects were felt as far north as

New Jersey, where riptides and rough surf interfered with weekend swimming plans.

Some 8,000 National Guard members were assigned to recovery efforts. Eleven suspected looters were arrested in Palm Beach, Orange and Indian River counties.

At one point, about 2.8 million people in 40 counties were told to evacuate from coastal areas, barrier islands, mobile homes and low-lying areas. An estimated 79,000 people were still in emergency shelters Monday, down from about 108,000 on Sunday, in the largest evacuation in state history; thousands of others had gone to hotels or stayed with friends or family members.

Clinton's heart surgery successful

BY SAM DOLNICK
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former President Bill Clinton underwent successful heart bypass surgery Monday at a Manhattan hospital and was resting comfortably, his spokesman said.

"The surgery was successful and the president is resting comfortably," Clinton spokesman Jim Kennedy said.

Preparations for the surgery began at about 6:45 a.m. EDT, said a hospital source who spoke on condition of anonymity. The Clinton spokesman confirmed just before 1:30 p.m. the surgery was complete.

The surgical team was led by Dr. Craig R. Smith, the hospital's chief of cardiothoracic surgery. Clinton, 58, was hospitalized Friday after suffering chest pains and shortness of breath.

It remained unclear exactly how many arteries were involved. A source close to the Clinton family has said three or four of Clinton's arteries were clogged.

In bypass surgery, doctors remove one or more blood vessels from elsewhere in the body and attach them to arteries serving the heart, detouring blood around blockages. The vessel typically comes from elsewhere in the chest, although doctors sometimes take one from an arm, a leg or the stomach.

Doctors say the surgery is a routine procedure and Clinton should recover within a month or two.

The former president and his family issued a statement on the Clinton Foundation's Web site on Sunday, saying they felt "blessed



Former President Bill Clinton waves to delegates July 26 at the Democratic National Convention in Boston. Clinton had successful heart bypass surgery Monday.

and grateful for the thousands of prayers and messages of good will we have received these past few days."

"While bypass surgery certainly isn't something to look forward to, we are very lucky that the condition was detected in time to have this procedure before something more serious occurred," the statement said.

The Web site said Clinton had received more than 30,000 get-well messages over the past several days.

New York Presbyterian Hospital is one of the country's premier hospitals for heart surgery, ranked seventh in the nation this year by U.S. News & World Report.

Clinton has blamed the blockage in part on genetics — there is a history of heart disease in his mother's family — but also said he "may have done some damage in those years when I was too careless about what I ate."

Stars and Stripes

Messages of Support

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Love, your cousin, Allyson

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IMPACT CARDS ACCEPTED

Poll: Majority of U.S. satisfied with work

BY WILL LESTER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON—A majority of Americans say they find satisfaction in their jobs, according to an Associated Press poll, though many express concerns about job stress, health care and retirement benefits.

Peggy Branan, a 44-year-old nurse in the New Orleans area, is among about half of the population who say they are "very satisfied" with their job.

"I feel blessed to be able to get paid for what I enjoy doing," said Branan, a nurse for 21 years.

Seven in 10 surveyed said they are paid fairly. Men were more likely than women to feel this way.

For Branan, work is an important part of who she is. That same feeling was shared by six in 10 workers.

As people celebrated Labor Day this weekend, about nine in

10 workers say they find their job at least somewhat satisfying, according to the poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs.

"The level of the public's satisfaction with work is high and has been quite stable for the last 30 years," said Tom Smith, director of the General Social Survey at the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago.

One of the more frequent complaints is the growing amount of stress at work. In the poll, 34 percent said they were dissatisfied with the amount of stress. Other leading complaints included opportunities advancement as well as health and retirement benefits.

Adults age 18 to 29 were most likely to say their jobs was something they mainly do to earn money.

People over 30 were more likely to say they were very satisfied with their jobs.

Those most likely to say they were very satisfied were white, married, college-educated, homeowners and Republicans.

The poll found that 42 percent said their jobs were interesting nearly all of the time. One-half of those surveyed said their job is interesting most of the time, but has dull stretches.

Some 61 percent felt strongly that they do a good job balancing

work and family. About the same number of men and women made this claim, although those who work more than 40 hours a week were less certain they have struck the balance.

The poll also found that:

■ 36 percent of those surveyed strongly agreed that their job allows them to reach their full potential.

■ People were evenly split on how they feel about going back to work after a long weekend or a few days off.

The AP-Ipsos poll of 589 workers was taken Aug. 16-18 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates | |
|--|--------------|
| Euro | \$1.249 |
| British pound | \$1.84 |
| Japanese yen (Sept. 7) | 107.00 |
| South Korean won (Sept. 6) | 1,129.00 |
| Commercial rates | |
| Bahrain (Dinar) | 0.377 |
| British pound | \$1.759 |
| Canada (dollar) | 1.286 |
| Denmark (Krone) | 6.067 |
| Egypt (Pound) | 0.29 |
| France (Euro) | \$1.291 |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | 0.796 |
| Hungary (Forint) | 203.75 |
| Iceland (Krona) | 72.535 |
| Israel (Shekel) | 4.516 |
| Japan (Yen) | 110.60 |
| Kuwait (Dinar) | 0.247 |
| Norway (Krone) | 6.8239 |
| Philippines (Peso) | 46.66 |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 3.7561 |
| Singapore (Dollar) | 1.2423 |
| South Korea (Won) | 1,349.10 |
| Switzerland (Franc) | 1.2692 |
| Thailand (Baht) | 21.53 |
| Turkey (Lira) | 1,515,152.00 |
| (Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are inter-bank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.) | |

PRECIOUS METALS

| London close | |
|--------------|----------|
| Gold | \$401.60 |
| Silver | \$5.51 |

INTEREST RATES

| | |
|---|------|
| Prime rate | 4.50 |
| Discount rate | 2.25 |
| Federal funds market rate | 1.50 |
| 3-month bill | 1.50 |
| 30-year bond | 5.06 |
| Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America, Bloomberg.com | |

Cents and Sensibility Money tip of the day

Internships will work

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — For many young people, a first job is preceded by at least one internship, often either unpaid or for credit. It's an opportunity that shouldn't be wasted.

An internship is a great way to get your foot in the door at any company and gain valuable on-the-job skills. To make the most of your internship:

■ Treat it as seriously as you would a real job. Show up on time, and dress appropriately.

■ Keep a positive attitude. Not all internships will be happy experiences, but you should aim to leave a good impression. Don't whine or complain about work

while at the office; save that for home.

■ Be proactive. As the low man on the totem pole, you may not be given much to do.

■ Complete assignments in a timely manner, and then ask your supervisor what else you can do to help.

■ Treat menial tasks as an opportunity. If you're asked to file papers, do it with a smile. But there's a difference between doing an errand and spending a whole day running errands — talk to your supervisor if your internship turns into a go-for job.

■ Network. Introduce yourself to everyone in the office. Before your internship ends, collect a business card from everyone you worked with.

New Web site delivers personalized stamps

BY TED ANTHONY
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — America's first postage stamps appeared in 1847 — rough, unperfected squares of ink and paper that depicted George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. The portraits in miniature oozed gravitas and, in their quiet way, nudged along a growing national identity.

Over the next 157 years, hundreds of American luminaries, landscapes and milestones have appeared inside the small canvases that we stick onto the envelope's outer: Lincoln, David Webster, The Statue of Liberty, The moon missions, Pocahontas, Cape Hatteras, Scott Joplin, Herman Melville, Your dog.

Your dog? Yep. Your dog. And your new baby, your grandfather, your car, your floral arrangement, your Chevy truck, even your bathroom sink.

Thanks to a new test program by a firm called Stamp.com, any picture uploaded from your computer — well, almost any picture — can, for \$16.99, become a sheet of made-to-order postage stamps that can be used on any envelope.

Initial reports indicate success: In the first three weeks since the

test program debuted Aug. 10, the company has taken orders for 400,000 sheets.

"It's created a new way for people to express themselves," says Ken McBride, Stamp.com's CEO.

That's 21st-Century, niche-marketed-to-the-nth-degree word, customization reigns. And technology is giving consumers new relationships with their products by effectively putting the means of production into their hands.

But as the cult of individuality steers the marketplace, a pivotal question arises: In a world of products, is there a role for national consciousness? Beyond the self, should we be customizing every piece of our world? Postage was long part of the fabric of national identity in a far-flung land sewing itself together.

But turning the stamp in "Your Photo Here," while exciting, isn't the same cultural expression.

"It's saying, 'postage is about me' rather than some national notion," says Roy Rosenzweig, director of the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University.

"Part of the point of stamps was to tell us who we are," Rosenzweig says. Photostamps, though, represent "a symbol of some wider set of changes that are already out there — people identifying with smaller groups, with marketplaces instead of countries."

The logistics raise some provocative issues, too. What of stamp collectors? Would self-generated postage create new rarities daily — or would it be as valueless as paper from an inkjet printer? "We don't expect these ever to become collectible because there are infinite varieties and infinite options," says Allison Galloway, a spokeswoman for the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum.

Anything "objectionable" is forbidden (all submissions are vetted by two Stamp.com employees, each presumably with the general knowledge of a "Jeopardy" contestant), making it unlikely that porn-star postage will be debuting anytime soon.

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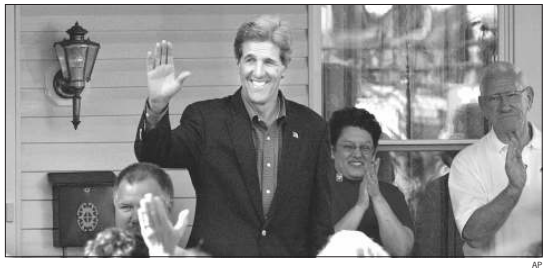
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Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., waves to supporters Monday while visiting a neighborhood in Canonsburg, Pa. Kerry and President Bush were to campaign in the Midwest on Labor Day.

Campaigns focus on jobs

Bush, Kerry, running mates hit Midwest for Labor Day

BY MARY DALRYMPLE

The Associated Press

CANONSBURG, Pa. — Democrat John Kerry opened his packed Labor Day schedule in battleground states Monday with talk of jobs, criticizing the Bush administration for doing little to help workers in a tough economy.

"If you want four more years of your wages falling — if you want four more years of losing jobs overseas and replacing them with jobs that pay \$9,000 less than the jobs you had before, then you should go vote for George Bush," Kerry said at an early rally.

Jobs was the order of the day for both campaigns, which were fanning out across the Midwest.

Kerry also told voters he would try to pull out troops in Iraq within four years. "We want those troops home, and my goal would be to try to get them home in a first term," Kerry said, speaking to a

fellow Vietnam War veteran in the audience of his campaign event.

President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney were heading to three states between them Monday: Kerry and running mate John Edwards were venturing to six. Cheney and Edwards set campaign courses that cross paths in St. Paul, Minn.

Polls in half the eight states on the candidates' Labor Day agenda — Minnesota, Iowa, Pennsylvania and Ohio — show them running neck-and-neck. Those four states offer 58 electoral votes, more than 20 percent of the total needed to win.

Kerry chose to spend his Labor Day in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, hoping to sway traditionally Democratic West Virginia away from its tilt toward Bush.

Bush, campaigning Sunday in West Virginia, said Kerry would "stifle job creation" with tax increases. Kerry wants to roll back

Bush's income and investment tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of the nation.

"My opponent has promised to raise some taxes. That's a promise politicians tend to keep," Bush said. "This Labor Day weekend, it's important for America's workers to know that my opponent wants to tax your jobs."

The economy is looming large in voters' minds. Although payroll jobs have grown by 1.7 million in the last 12 months, the economy still has lost 913,000 jobs overall since Bush took office.

A new Time magazine poll showed six in 10 Americans called economic conditions poor or only fair, while 32 percent called conditions good or excellent. The poll showed Americans split on Bush's handling of the economy, with 49 percent approving and 48 percent disapproving.

However, 57 percent said they felt they had not personally benefited from his tax cuts.

Editor's note: Three times a week, The Associated Press picks an issue and asks the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates a question about it.

On the issues: College costs

Is there anything the federal government should do to ease the costs of post-secondary education?



President Bush

"My 2005 budget requests a record \$73.1 billion in financial aid to help nearly 10 million students attend college, an increase of \$25.9 billion (55 percent) since I took office. I have increased Pell Grant funding 47 percent, helping 1 million more low-income students. My plan also provides students with the chance to receive up to \$5,000 to study math or science. It is important that students graduate high school ready to do college-level work. No Child Left Behind and my high school reforms will ensure students are academically prepared for college so they are less likely to drop out. And I have proposed Enhanced Pell grants to provide additional assistance to low-income students who complete challenging coursework in high school that prepares them to succeed."



Sen. John Kerry

"Absolutely. Unlike George Bush, I refuse to let it become harder and harder for families to send their kids to college and do better. As president, I will enact a College Opportunity tax credit on up to \$4,000 a year for four years of tuition at a public university. I will ensure that this credit is eligible for 'advanced payment,' so students get the resources they need when tuition is due. Unlike current credits, my tax credit will be refundable for those students who need help the most and for those who receive other credits. I will provide \$10 billion in state fiscal relief for higher education, and I will offer a simple deal to hundreds of thousands of America's young people: If you will serve for two years in one of America's toughest and most important jobs, we will pay for four years of tuition at a public university."

Call for Muslim vote

ROSEMONT, Ill. — American Muslim leaders ended their largest annual meeting with a ringing plea to thousands of community members that they vote in the presidential election.

Muslims urgently want to register their political presence in this country as a step toward ending what many believe are excesses in the war on terror.

The American Muslim Taskforce, an umbrella group for top U.S. Muslim organizations, met behind closed doors separately from the election conference, deliberating whether to make an endorsement in the race.

Both Democrats and Republicans are seeking their support.

A decision is expected by next month.

From The Associated Press

Strategists: Kerry needs to turn campaign to economy

BY DAVID S. BRODER

AND DAN BALZ

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Democratic presidential challenger Sen. John Kerry begins the fall campaign on the defensive and faces the urgent necessity to make the race about the economy and other domestic concerns, after President Bush used his convention to say this election is all about keeping the country safe.

Bush rode out of New York after a four-day convention tightly focused on terrorism — and what Republicans claim is the striking contrast between the credentials of the two candidates as commander in chief. Democratic strategists now say it is essential for Kerry to seize back the initiative that was lost during the month of August.

"The most important thing is for Kerry to re-engage the economic debate and ... to be crystal-clear in framing the choice for voters," said Geoffrey Garin, a pollster whose clients include the Democratic National Committee. "The Republicans were very disciplined in how they wanted to frame the choice. ... I think this is the moment where Kerry has to lay that out clearly."

Kerry strategist Tad Devine said the cam-

Analysis

campaign is moving to shift the debate from terrorism to health care, jobs and other domestic issues under the theme that "a stronger America begins at home."

A senior Kerry adviser agreed. "They made a determination that they're going to run strictly on terrorism and command-in-chief," he said of the Bush campaign. "We need the voters to make a different decision."

On the GOP convention's final day, Kerry strategists told reporters in New York they were launching a TV ad campaign designed to emphasize the economic issues they believe are upmost for voters in battleground states. They also plan to portray Kerry as the candidate who cares most about local concerns, whether it is nuclear waste storage in Nevada or job loss in Ohio.

The first post-convention indicators show that Kerry will be running from behind. A Newsweek magazine poll released Saturday showed Bush leading Kerry 52 percent to 41 percent, with independent Ralph Nader at 3 percent. A Time magazine poll released Friday showed a similar 11-point margin, although two other polls taken while the con-

vention was in progress showed the race statistically tied.

The two sides are operating under different theories of how to win this election — and not only whether terrorism or the economy will tip the balance in November.

Polling shows that jobs and the economy are the number one concern of voters, and they have been the staple of Kerry's campaign all year.

Democrats contend that overall, incomes have declined since Bush took office, and they say that the tax cuts at the heart of his economic policy have increased inequality and left millions of workers and their families struggling to pay their bills.

But Bush now has economic figures to bolster his claim that the country has gone through the worst of the downturn and is coming back, and pre-convention polls showed voters rated Bush equal with Kerry on managing the economy.

On national security issues, Bush maintains a strong advantage.

Convention speakers — including Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney — avoided any mention of "swaps of mass destruction" and other failures of prewar intelligence in Iraq, while the president offered a hopeful scenario for the restoration of de-

mocracy in that country and an eventual shift of security responsibilities to Iraqi forces.

Although polls show increasing majorities of Americans question the wisdom of going to war with Iraq, Kerry is inhibited on that issue by his history — voting for the original use-of-force resolution, then against funds for operations in Iraq.

Democratic strategists inside and outside the campaign argue that Bush has left Kerry an opening to make the final two months of the election a debate about domestic issues. "We can talk to people about things they care deeply about," Devine said, pointing to the cost and availability of health care, the expense of college and the uncertainty of the jobs picture. "Bush does not have enough credibility to talk directly to people about things like that."

The two agendas are likely to collide when Kerry and Bush meet for their first debate, tentatively scheduled for Sept. 30 in Miami. The subject matter of that debate will be one of the negotiating topics when former secretary of state James A. Baker III and attorney Vernon E. Jordan Jr. sit down on behalf of the two campaigns. Each is likely to push to put his candidate's favored topic at the forefront of that first debate.

Cowboys of Color Rodeo blazes new trail

BY BRETT HOFFMAN

Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH, Texas — It was the late 1960s when a group of visionaries summoned Cleo Hearn to New York City in an attempt to persuade him to produce an African-American rodeo.

At first, Hearn wasn't keen on the idea because he believed that a minority rodeo would promote segregation, and Hearn was commanding respect as a roper on the pro rodeo circuit, which traditionally is dominated by white competitors.

But Hearn said he changed his mind after he visited Harlem and was challenged by a woman who was part of his group.

"We were driving down the street, and I saw a kid who was 12 or 13 years old, and it was apparent that he was on drugs," Hearn said. "She asked me, 'If that kid saw a black cowboy at a rodeo who was a role model, would it change his life?' That settled the issue for Hearn, 65, who has produced hundreds of rodeos for minorities for more than 30 years.

Last week, Hearn was to produce the Cowboys of Color Rodeo at Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum, where more than 300 cowboys and cowgirls who are African-American, Hispanic, Native American, European and Asian competed in afternoon performances.

The rodeo was to raise funds for the National Cowboys of Color Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth.

When Hearn visited Harlem, it became clear that African-American



FORT WORTH (TEXAS) STAR-TELEGRAM/AP

Cleo Hearn, center, was inspired by a young child in Harlem to spearhead the start of the Cowboys of Color Rodeo. A fund-raising rodeo was held Saturday at the Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum in Fort Worth, Texas, to raise money for the National Cowboys of Color Museum and Hall of Fame. With Hearn are fellow Hall of Fame members Myrtis Dightman, left, and Steven R. Heape.

cans needed role models, and the rodeo arena was a great venue, he said. Within a year, he was producing an all-black rodeo in Newark, N.J.

Hearn said offering minority cowboys and cowgirls the chance to compete has been rewarding because the sport provides an ex-

cellent training ground for overcoming life's challenges.

"There are two main ingredients for success in life: having discipline and having respect for the rights of other people," Hearn said. "If a person could be a rodeo cowboy for two months, he would learn to respect others."

"When a cowboy goes down the road, he learns camaraderie. For example, if I break down on the road, another cowboy will come along, load my horse and make sure I get to the rodeo, and it will be a cowboy that I'm competing against."

"It also takes discipline to stay mentally and physically ready."

You have to discipline your mind to ride a bull because it just might be your last ride."

Being disciplined and focused helped Hearn attend Oklahoma State on a rodeo scholarship in the 1960s, a unique combination for an African-American at the time. Discipline and focus helped him become a member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association in 1959.

Unlike NCAA rules, college competitors can participate in the PRCA and the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association at the same time, and Hearn took full advantage of the opportunity while completing a business degree at OSU. The degree helped Hearn land a job with Ford Motor Co., and he worked his way up to a regional zone manager for the auto giant before retiring earlier this year.

Bae's not slowing down as a competitor. Hearn is competing in "Old Timers" roping events, the minority rodeos and PRCA shows.

He has competed as a calf roper in the past 36 years at the Cheyenne Frontier Days, which is conducted each July and billed as the "Daddy of 'Em All."

Before he visited New York more than 30 years ago, Hearn's main goal was to consistently finish in the money at the sport's top events.

"At the time, my main goal was to be a world champion cowboy," Hearn said. "But I've found that the best way that God has used me was by my putting on Cowboys of Color rodeos. They are a developmental system for pro rodeo and for life."

Shortage of school psychologists hurting rural communities

BY JAMES HANNAH

The Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio — Ken Smith spends hours on the road, sometimes skips lunch and works at home in the evening to catch up with paperwork.

That's the life of a school psychologist who serves 30 elementary and secondary schools.

"There has been a shortage of school psychologists in southern Ohio," said Smith, 43, who works in two rural counties around the southern Ohio city of Portsmouth. "We definitely need more. Day to day — that's what we're dealing with."

The problem isn't limited to Ohio.

Kathy Cowan, spokeswoman for the National Association of School Psychologists, says there is a serious shortage of school psychologists nationwide, especially in rural areas.

An association survey done in 2000 found there were between 25,000 and 30,000 school psychologists. The group estimates in 2002 that only about one-third of the nation's school districts had at least one psychologist for every 1,000 students, the minimum the association recommends.

As a result, experts say the shortage of school psychologists in rural areas is making it tougher for districts to meet federal academic standards. They say school psychologists help students with learning disabilities and those who respond to different teaching styles or techniques.

"One of the main jobs of school psycholo-

gists is to find ways to help students not able to achieve academically," said Sawyer Hunley, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Dayton. "Without that assistance, teachers are pretty much left on their own."

But attracting people to rural areas is difficult.

Peter Currier, an assistant superintendent for Modoc County in rural northern

California is looking for a school psychologist to help the other two who travel the county's 5,000 square miles. One drives three hours a day to spend five hours with students.

"I started looking for a credentialed psychologist and I will be lucky to find a student intern," Currier said.

"It's hard to make a match with someone who wants a rural, remote lifestyle. We're 100 miles from a Wal-Mart. We're 100 miles from a McDonald's."

That translates into less support for children and their families, Currier said.

"When you're dealing with a child with significant behavior problems and their behavior is interfering with their ability to make progress, the school psychologist is

the best resource," said Ruth Fodness, who spent 14 years working as a school psychologist in rural South Dakota, driving up to 200 miles a day to meet with students at different schools.

Attracting and retaining school psychologists became such a problem in northwest Ohio's rural Mercer County that officials came up with a creative fix three years ago.

"We weren't finding good people that wanted to be in rural Ohio," said Superintendent Eugene Linton.

So officials identified people with local roots who worked in the schools and were interested in becoming school psychologists.

The district paid part of their tuition at the University of Dayton in exchange for their agreement to intern at Mercer County schools and then work there for at least five years.

"Most of them want to stay here anyway, so the five-year commitment is no problem," Linton said.

The shortage in southeast Ohio has prompted three universities to join forces to establish a training center there. Marshall University, the University of Dayton and Shawnee State University will begin of-

"It's hard to make a match with someone who wants a rural, remote lifestyle. We're 100 miles from a Wal-Mart. We're 100 miles from a McDonald's."

Peter Currier

Assistant superintendent for Modoc County in rural northern California



School psychologist Ken Smith sits outside the Eastern Kentucky University Center Thursday in Portsmouth, Ohio. The lack of school psychologists in rural areas is hurting schools' efforts to improve academic performance and meet mandates of the No Child Left Behind program.

fering a psychology program in Portsmouth next year.

Smith said he would welcome a fresh supply of school psychologists to boost his five-person staff. He's sure teachers would too.

"There is no one else out there that has the training we do as far as testing and assessment," he said. "And I do very little counseling because the testing requirements of the job do not give me any time."

FACES 'N' PLACES

Cruise empties mind for character role

Playing a heartless hit man in "Collateral," Tom Cruise said he emptied his mind as he emptied ammo clips into victims during filming.

But the grinning nice-guy swore he hasn't got a bit of murder in him in real life.

Promoting the movie at the Venice Film Festival in Italy, Cruise was asked if perhaps the most evil character of his career had inspired any homicidal thoughts.

"I wouldn't kill anyone because I don't want to," he said, and then asked a reporter: "Who would you kill?" The reply: "Osama bin Laden, for example."

Cruise paused. "Well, yeah, yeah. But I just don't want to kill anyone."

His character, on the other hand, doesn't want much else.

Director Michael Mann's thriller, which was not in competition for an award, features Cruise as murder-machine Vincent, who is paid to kill five federal witnesses in one night. Jamie Foxx is Max, a hapless cabbie who picks up the hit man.



Cruise

Former UCLA basketball coach honored

Former longtime UCLA basketball coach John Wooden was among 10 educators honored at the unveiling of a sidewalk monument honoring teachers.

The ceremony was attended by about 200 parents, students, friends and officials. Wooden coached the Bruins from 1947-1975 and was an English teacher before that.

"It's nice to see teachers honored," he said from Los Angeles.

The row of 10 bronze plaques dubbed the Walk of Hearts lines the front of a San Fernando Valley theater. It features the names of teachers set in designs of laurels shaped like a heart and an apple.

During Wooden's coaching career, UCLA won seven straight national championships, an NCAA record of eight game-winning streak, and four 30-0 seasons.

Elephant Man to perform at Creole fest



Elephant Man

Jamaican reggae artist Elephant Man will be among 15 performers at the eighth annual World Creole Music Festival in Dominica next month.

Dominica's festival is one of the largest Creole music celebrations in the Caribbean. Thousands attended last year, many coming from surrounding islands with French Creole roots, including Guadeloupe and Martinique.

Other bands and performers lined up for the Oct. 20-21 festival include Magnum, Dominik Coco, Sweet Mickey, Canela and Escalé, festival director Jeffery Brisbane said.

"We feel that the festival continues to grow year by year," Brisbane said.

Creole music has an African base mixed with Caribbean calypso and Latin beats, and is built around drums, guitar and organs. It emerged when French Creole slaves would mark the end of the harvest by singing, and evolved to include modern instruments.

'Phepsival' to celebrate Olympic athlete

It's billed as a "Phepsival," a party, parade and presentation for Michael Phelps after his Olympic triumph.

The swimming champion makes his homecoming this coming week, and Baltimore County Executive James Smith announced plans for a day of tributes Sept. 11.

There will be an honorary renaming of Cedar Avenue after Phelps, and a parade winding through downtown Towson, Md., will culminate in a ceremony on the Court House Plaza. The swimmer, who finished with six gold medals and two bronze at the Athens Games, will receive the keys to Baltimore County.

Phelps and fellow medalists Lenny Krayzelburg and Ian Crocker plan to show their swimming skills at the "Swim With the Stars" show Sept. 10 at the University of Maryland.



Phelps

Stories and photos from wire services.

AL YANKOVIC: HE'S NOT WEIRD AT ALL

'Humor is a cathartic experience,' singer says

BY DANIEL P. FINNEY

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS — Journey with us now, dear readers, into the seedy, dark and mysterious world of a rock musician on tour.

Take an exclusive tour through the chamber of sin and terror that is a best-selling and Grammy-winning artist's tour bus.

Read the harrowing, life-on-the-edge tales of sex, drugs and ...

Aw, who are we kidding? We spent a couple hours with "Weird Al" Yankovic when he played Six Flags St. Louis. The guy famous for his parodies of popular songs, artists and pop culture in general is about as low-key, easy-going and down-to-earth as you can find.

No drugs. No hookers. No trips to the emergency room. Well, OK, the key-boardist had to go to the emergency room, but we think it was just an upset stomach.

Known for garish Hawaiian shirts and a wildly antic on-stage personality, Yankovic barely had the scenes is decidedly unsexy. He appears wearing battered blue jeans, black flip-flops and a muted brown tie-dye T-shirt.

"It's pretty boring around here on tour," Yankovic says, gesturing around his bus. "If you were riding this bus with us, you'd just find a bunch of people playing with their laptops and watching TV."

The bus interior is a mixture of forest greens, marble grays and black tiles. No construction zone oranges, banana yellows or psychedelic flower patterns. Not even a whoopee cushion.

The only luxury is a big-screen TV with the satellite hookup — tuned to the Fuse music video network — and even the TV is something you'd expect to find in a suburban house.

"Yeah, we rent these buses, so we don't do a lot of decorating," Yankovic says. "Maybe Steven Tyler (of Aerosmith) outfits his bus differently, but this is how we do it."

Yankovic is the grand champion of the novelty album, perhaps the most successful comedy music artist since Allan Sherman. He broke through with a parody of the Knack's "My Sharona," called "My Bologna," in 1979 at the age of 20.

Since then, Yankovic has dominated a genre riddled with one-hit wonders and amusing novelties. He has lampooned everyone from Michael Jackson to Coolio. In his wonderfully over-the-top videos, he has dressed as a

Jedi knight singing in a coffeehouse and wonderfully mocked Kurt Cobain's angst-ridden grunge rock.

A career that most critics write off as trivial has nonetheless earned Yankovic three Grammys, including his most recent in 2003 for best comedy album in recognition of "Poodle Hat."

Yankovic seems less like a rock star and more like a guy you'd find moving his lawn on a Saturday afternoon. His gags are usually clever word plays, slapstick comedy and flatulence jokes. He never strays into overly sexual material, and a curse word can't be found in the library of his work. The mixture makes Yankovic an all-ages act, popular with children, parents and graying adults alike.

"My humor tends to be on the clean side," Yankovic says. "I've never really targeted one demographic or another, but I recognize that my stuff is popular with families because it's clean — sometimes cleaner than the source."

Behind the laughter, bright costumes and silliness, Yankovic is reserved and soft-spoken, almost shy. He answers questions thoughtfully, the very definition of earnest and erudite. Yet, the comic singer breathes little real emotion even though there is certainly plenty of it in his life these days.

In April, Yankovic's parents both died suddenly of carbon monoxide poisoning at their home. After the funeral, the king of musical comedy decided to keep touring.

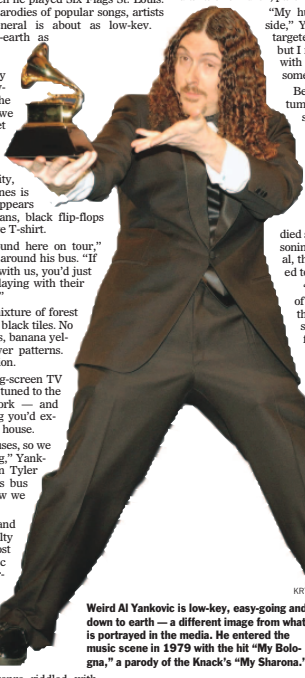
"You know, I've been told by a lot of people that my music helped them get through tough times," he says, his brown eyes scanning the floor of his tour bus. "I've had people tell me that my work stopped them from committing suicide. I'm hoping that my music will help me now."

The tour, though, inspires a different kind of sadness. It means he's separated from his wife and 18-month-old daughter for weeks at a time. Yankovic says he only tours about 18 days in a year before taking a break to spend time with his family.

"I wouldn't do it otherwise," he says. "It's just too hard to be away from them."

"Humor is a cathartic experience," Yankovic says.

musics. "That's why I've never thought about doing 'serious' songs. There are enough people doing funny music. I'm happy to laugh."



Weird Al Yankovic is low-key, easy-going and down to earth — a different image from what is portrayed in the media. He entered the music scene in 1979 with the hit "My Bologna," a parody of the Knack's "My Sharona."

Fen-phen fraud?

MI JACKSON — Twelve people who received portions of a \$400 million settlement with the manufacturer of the diet drug fen-phen in 1999 have been arrested and charged with fraud for allegedly lying about taking the drug.

The defendants are accused of submitting fake pharmacy documents showing they used the diet drug. They face up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted of conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States.

The arrests came after a year-long federal investigation into a rural corner of southwestern Mississippi where juries have been known to return multimillion-dollar verdicts, attracting lawyers who were eager to capitalize.

Dog abuse investigation

TX CORPUS CHRISTI — Police and animal control officers in Corpus Christi are investigating after a dog was found bound and decapitated in a field near a middle school.

The dog named Lucky, a cocker spaniel and poodle cross, was reported missing to the Lost Pet Hotline on Aug. 19. The dog was found dead Wednesday.

Linda Garza — who had gotten Lucky from her boss a few weeks ago and then gave the dog to her mother — said she has three young nephews who fell in love with the fluffy dog.

Cheryl Quinones, co-founder of the Corpus Christi Animal Rights Effort, said \$1,500 had been raised toward a reward for the arrest and conviction of those responsible for mutilating the dog. The nonprofit group investigates instances of animal cruelty.

Nuclear pills available

PA HARRISBURG — Nuclear watchdog group Three Mile Island Alert will distribute free potassium iodide pills that can protect the thyroid gland from radiation in the event of a nuclear accident.

The pills, known as KI, are a salt compound that contains iodine. They protect the thyroid gland against cancer from radioactive iodine, which can be released during an accident. The thyroid gland is the only part of the body that is protected by KI.

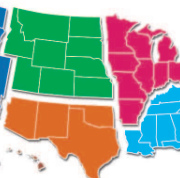
The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has recommended distribution of KI pills to residents living within 10 miles of nuclear plants.

The state Department of Health distributed KI pills last month in areas near Three Mile Island, Peach Bottom and other nuclear stations.

Bus driver threatens kids

WI MILWAUKEE — A school bus driver caught on a hidden tape recorder threatening to beat a 8-year-old boy with Down's Syndrome was sentenced to six months in jail.

Brian Duchow, 29, pleaded guilty in May to one count of child abuse that intentionally caused



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

great harm after a criminal complaint said he admitted slapping the boy and cursing at him on the bus.

Jacob Mutolo's parents had placed a voice-activated tape recorder in their son's backpack because of concerns about how the boy was behaving on the bus.

On the recording, Duchow can be heard telling the boy to "stop before I beat the living hell out of you," among other threats.

T-Rex fossil removed

SD SIOUX FALLS — Harding County wants a team of fossil hunters to return a juvenile Tyrannosaurus rex named "Tinker" unearthed from northwest South Dakota in 1998.

The county filed a federal lawsuit Aug. 20 against dinosaur hunter Ron Frithiof of Austin, Texas, Kim Hollrah of Iowa, Melody Harrell of Texas, Fred Debnover of Colorado, and five unidentified parties.

The lawsuit alleges the team wrongfully and illegally removed the skeletal remains from county property and asks for the dinosaur and all its rights to be given to the county. It accuses the parties of engaging in fraud, trespass and a civil conspiracy.

Joe Ellingson, a Spearfish attorney representing Frithiof, called the lawsuit frivolous, saying his client is a respected businessman who was willing to share a portion



Political animals

Alabama Secretary of State Kay Ivey, left, pets a couple of female goats on the steps of the Capitol in Montgomery, Ala.

of proceeds from the dinosaur's sale with the county.

Male nurse flap

RI PORTSMOUTH — A candidate offered a school nurse position in Portsmouth has taken another job, after residents questioned whether he should get the job because he is a man.

The Portsmouth School Committee last week delayed a vote on hiring Victor Moniz after a parent said his gender might make female students uncomfortable.

The move sparked backlash, including a letter from the Rhode Island Affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union.

On Tuesday, the committee approved Moniz's hiring.

'Hokie Bird' wine debuts

VA BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech tailgaters will have their own wine to wash down the burgers and dogs this fall.

"Hokie Bird" will be bottled by Chateau Morrisette, a winery in Floyd County, under a licensing agreement announced Friday.

Tech spokesman Mark Owczarski said the wine is not intended for the student section of the stands. "This is going to be one of those products that's targeted to our alumni and responsible drinking," he said.

Hokie Bird Red and Hokie Bird White will go on sale at stores this fall. A portion of the sales proceeds will go toward the university's general scholarship fund.

Severe child neglect

MA BOSTON — Four children ages 2 months to 6 years found alone in a garbage- and roach-infested apartment were placed in foster care, while officials investigate two mothers involved.

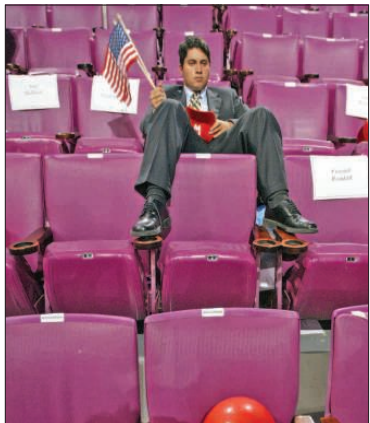
Boston police and EMS removed the children from the Seaver Street apartment in the city's Roxbury neighborhood after police were called to the building when a neighbor reported hearing the 6-year-old girl crying. Police found a 2-month-old girl sleeping on a bed, a 20-month-old girl sleeping on a bean bag and using a metal heater for a pillow and a 3-year-old boy sleeping on a bunk. All of the children were wearing soiled diapers, police said.

Firewood checkpoint

OH TOLEDO — State troopers stopped cars and campers at checkpoints Thursday along the Ohio-Michigan state line. They weren't looking for drunken drivers or drugs — just firewood.

Ohio has banned the bringing of firewood into the state from Michigan, where a tree-killing beetle has killed or infested 8 million ash trees.

Ohio Department of Agriculture officials think firewood is at least partially to blame for the spread of the emerald ash borer into Ohio, where thousands of trees, mainly in the Toledo area, have been destroyed by the pest over the past year or so.



The party's over

Max Siker, of Milwaukee, sits alone in the seats at Madison Square Garden after the conclusion of the Republican National Convention in New York.



Recreational rooster

12-year-old Danielle Rathbun of Fairbanks, Alaska, takes her pet rooster Mr. Clucky for a walk along Fourth Avenue.



Come sail away

Competing boats in the 30th annual Ruff Rider Regatta Catamaran race, which was launched from the flats on the Laguna Madre of South Padre Island, Texas, sail in a row.



Day at the park Betty Giffin of Arlington, Va., left, holds her 2-year-old granddaughter, Faith Dutch, of Manassas, as they feed a hungry goose at Lake Ridge Community Park in Lake Ridge, Va. Faith's mother, Tammy, sits next to them holding 7-month-old Hope Dutch.



Rushin' home A motorcyclist rolls through a tunnel on Iron Mountain Road as Mount Rushmore looms in the background near Keystone, S.D.



Taking a break A dragonfly rests on a branch along the shoreline of Lake Lou Emma in Van Buren, Ark.



Bovine bonding Stephanie Johnson, 15, spends some time with Rosie, a 2-month-old Polled Hereford cow, during the Haddam Neck Fair in Haddam, Conn.

Honeymoon hiker rescue

VT WATERBURY — A woman from Seattle celebrating her honeymoon with a hike on Hunger Mountain ended up on a stretcher with a special rescue team.

The Waterbury Backcountry Rescue Team was dispatched to the mountain after receiving an emergency 911 call.

The patient, a 38-year-old woman whose name was not released, was found a mile up the trail, according to rescue team leader Brian Lindner.

She fell and possibly broke her leg during her descent from the summit with her husband of three days.

Lindner said the condition of the trail wasn't bad and called it "almost a freak accident."

Lindner said the couple was in good spirits and able to joke about the fact it would be a honeymoon to remember.

Stealing to pay psychic?

TX MCALLEN — The former mayor of a small South Texas border town pleaded innocent to embezzling town funds to pay for a psychic more than \$53,000.

Former La Grulla Mayor Diana Cortez and former bookkeeper Sandra Lopez are accused of using public money to pay for the services of a psychic. Both pleaded innocent to federal embezzlement charges in a federal court in McAllen.

A federal indictment alleges they used city money to pay a psychic about \$53,700 for consultations, including the use of tarot cards.

Cortez, 48, was La Grulla's mayor from May 2001 to May 2003. The 45-year-old Lopez was the town bookkeeper during her administration.

If convicted, the women could face up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$500,000.

Rogue cop settlement

PA The Pennsylvania state police have agreed to pay \$5 million to settle allegations that commanders failed to rein in a rogue trooper who was sexually assaulting women.

The settlement covers civil lawsuits filed in U.S. federal court by four women, including one who was 14 in the late 1990s when she was assaulted by former trooper Michael Evans.

Evans pleaded guilty to criminal charges in 2000 and is serving a 5- to 10-year prison sentence. The women said several of his supervisors knew he had a history of unsavory conduct but never punished him or removed him from duty.

Young giraffe put down

WI RACINE — An 18-month-old giraffe was euthanized after becoming unable to stand up — the second death of a giraffe at the Racine Zoo this year.

Chas, a male Masai giraffe obtained from a Lufkin, Texas, zoo, after another giraffe died at the zoo in March, was euthanized last

week. The zoo staff had found him unable to stand.

Zoo veterinarian Dr. Kevin Nelson said the preliminary indications from blood work and X-rays were inconclusive.

Zoo personnel consulted other veterinarians with expertise in handling giraffes before making the decision to euthanize Chas.

Volcano park addition

HI VOLCANO — The public on Thursday got its first look at a 116,000-acre addition to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, U.S. Rep. Ed Case and Mayor Harry Kim were among the hundreds who got a first look at Kahuku Ranch lands, which run along the slopes of Mauna Loa.

"What we have done here in Hawaii is a model for the nation in successful partnerships between private land owners, environmental organizations and government agencies," Inouye said. "More of these projects must be done with an eye towards future generations."

The National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy last year paid \$22 million to acquire the Kahuku Ranch from Damon Estate.

Kim not told of death

VA DANVILLE — The brother of a former death row inmate who died of pneumonia in May said he didn't learn of his brother's death until three months later. Prison officials claim they couldn't locate the family.

A spokesman for the state medical examiner's office said that Calvin Swann, 49, died of natural causes on May 28.

But Clyde Swann, 48, one of Calvin Swann's brothers, said the family did not learn of the death until Aug. 25 when he called the prison.

"I've been visiting. I've been sending money, and they didn't contact me," Swann said. "He hadn't called in a while and I called to find out why, and they said he was deceased. I said, 'You must have him mixed up with somebody else.'"

Larry Traylor, spokesman for the Virginia Department of Corrections, said officials attempted to contact Swann's next-of-kin without any luck.

Doggie distress call

ME FRANKLIN — A playful doghouse might wind up in its owners' phone.

An emergency operator answered a 911 call at about 6:20 a.m., but nobody was on the line and all the operator could hear was a shuffling noise in the background, said Hancock County Sheriff's Deputy Shane Campbell.

Campbell and two emergency medical technicians went to the house to investigate, but the owners weren't home. What they found instead was a husky puppy and a chewed-up cordless phone on the floor.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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Defending 'Boys Day'

This is in reply to the article "Seeing what Dad does downrange" on Aug. 31 and letters to the editor that have followed. I have children, and if they had a chance to fire a M4 and M16 and wanted to, I would let them.

People are very much entitled to voice their opinions and I will voice mine: How is teaching a child to fire a weapon un-American or remotely close to brainwashing? I guess not. Am missing something. Maybe it's because children are being shown how to fire a M4 or M16 that folks have negative opinions. Maybe it's because it is soldiers who are showing children how to shoot. Would it be the same way if the soldiers were dressed as civilians, and a different type of weapon was being used?

If for one doesn't have a problem with the article, pictures or the whole "Boys Day Out" idea. The pictures and article are basically about showing the children of soldiers downrange what types of weapons their mothers or fathers may have, and letting them check out how to use them if they choose to. It's all about choice. Remember, the parents who aren't downrange and who let their children go to "Boys Day Out" chose to let them go because they wanted to. One picture showed a father showing his own son how to take aim on a paper target. Nothing wrong with that, or any of it, because it was everyone's choice to participate.

It is an absolutely great thing what the four detachments from the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment did for the children whose fathers or mothers are currently downrange. To the soldiers who participated in or organized "Boys Day Out": Keep up the good work with families because it's a great thing and it helps out a lot to know that the rear detachment is here for us.

Janie Massey
 Schweinfurt, Germany

90-day rotations for all

In the letter "Deployment hardship" (Aug. 24), the writer says he believes the 90-day rotation for activated Reserve and National Guard physicians and certified nurse anesthetists appears to be working. He suggests that other health-care professional classes be looked at more closely for possible inclusion into this policy on a case-by-case basis.

I agree this policy appears to be working for the 90-day soldiers. However, for the rest of the team that has to stay mobilized 12 to 18 months, this is the worst policy we have ever seen.

The first 90-day rotation mobilized with us of the 874th Forward Surgical Team at Forward Operating Base Warrior. Our unit bonded successfully and learned to operate with one another as a team. Upon the first rotation's departure and the second rotation's arrival, the breakdown of team cohesiveness and lack of communication began, and continues with the third rotation.

Our team alone, not including the

Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorials and columns. Letters are published in the newspaper, and values letters on topics of importance in the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity.

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 64345 Griesheim

Via fax: [Country code +49] (0) 6155/601395;
 DSN 349-8393

E-mail: letters@mail.strips.es.com

90-day rotators, has 14 personnel, all but two of whom are taking substantial pay cuts. They also have problems with financial burdens caused by this mobilization, but because we swore to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States we undertake this duty without complaint.

If the physicians and certified nurse anesthetists raised their hands and willingly became members of the U.S. Army, then they ought not to whine when it is not convenient to their schedules or finances. It was absolutely fine when they were at home drawing their military paychecks during the weekend, but when called to fulfill their obligations, many balk at the idea of even 90 days.

Not to discredit the Air Force and its way of operations, but why don't we all do 90-day rotations and spend the money evenly?

Staff Sgt. Tom Johansen
 Kirkuk, Iraq

Learning from mistakes

The Republicans are accusing John Kerry of being ineffectual. Kerry served in Vietnam at the same time I was serving the United States. He received medals for his actions and then got out, like most of us wanted to because we realized what we all had done to Vietnam as its people.

As a career officer in the Air Force I fully support people like former President Clinton and Kerry, who stood up for the rights of humanity and saw the evilness of that war. Each did it in his own way: one left the country to study in the United Kingdom and the other served his country honorably, got out of the service and then joined the anti-war movement.

I also support Kerry for his initial approval of the war in Iraq. The entire world wanted to go to war as a result of 9/11. We all wanted to hurt someone in our rage. It was the Republican leadership that linked Iraq to 9/11, thereby making it easier for President Bush to follow with his previously set plan that the country or it was deceitful, and Kerry as well as many others in the States and "Old Europe" saw through the deceit, albeit a bit too late.

What all of us have done is not indeci-

sive, it is based on learning from mistakes. The decision to go to Iraq was not based on anything that threatened the United States or any of its allies, which required defending it. It was a Bush decision. Tell that to the nearly 1,000 U.S. dead and God knows how many from the other side.

Ret. Air Force Maj.
 Klaus-D. Paul
 Kaiserslautern, Germany

Beware of warranties

I am an 11-year Army veteran. I bought a new Dodge Grand Caravan with an extended warranty while assigned to a state-side base in 2000. I knew I was returning to Germany to live after getting out, and made sure to ask if the warranty was good overseas. I was assured it was.

Recently, I needed to use my warranty services for some covered minor repairs. I had paid for a five-year, 60,000-mile warranty, and thought the dealership would fix the problem without hassle. The vehicle had around 50,000 miles on it. When I got to the German dealership, I was told that my "extended warranty" bought in the States was no good after 48,000 miles in Germany.

I contacted the dealership in Maryland where I bought the vehicle, and told them the situation. Their answer was that they would cancel my warranty as of June of this year, and adjust the amount according to that date. Well, of the almost \$900 that originally spent, I would only receive a little over \$100 back. This issue is still not resolved as I have contacted DaimlerChrysler about this, and await an answer.

I am writing to let readers know that their hard-earned dollars may be wasted on extended warranties that are not good overseas. Luckily, mine were not. Repairs I could handle, but imagine if it were a major problem involving thousands of dollars.

Liem Schlager
 Schweinfurt, Germany

Civilians in uniforms

Every morning here at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, I proudly slide into a crisp, clean, perfectly attired U.S. military desert camouflage uniform, only to stand next to a civilian in the breakfast line who has their boots, haircut and a shower are optional.

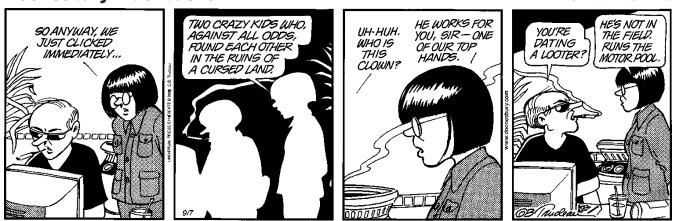
First, let me thank all the civilians in Kuwait and Iraq who do so much for us and overseas. Luckily, mine were not. Repairs I could handle, but imagine if it were a major problem involving thousands of dollars.

The military expects the Army and other service components to wear their uniforms correctly and proudly. But what does it matter when a great majority of civilians in DCUs don't? Can the public here determine the difference between a soldier or a DOD personnel? My guess is no. The people they see are Americans, and their appearance reflects on the American people. So please, wear your uniform proudly.

Sgt. Jacob Freuburger
 Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

By GARRY TRUDEAU

Doodlesbury Flashbacks



OPINION

Bush speech weakened by lack of specifics

John Kerry, the Republicans kept telling us at their convention last week, has perfected the flip-flop. It's a skill that has its uses, such as evaluating whether President Bush made a convincing case in his acceptance speech that he should be re-elected.

Jay Ambrose

Yes, he did. No, he didn't. His domestic agenda was more energetic and innovative than Kerry's, but lacked either focus or convincing specificity. Bush used a wonderful phrase in the speech — "the ownership society" — but did little to amplify the idea or to show how more than a few of his proposals were connected to it. On top of some of his better proposals were a number of lesser ones in the laundry-list sort. The word "mishmash" comes to mind.

Once again, Bush said he would push to let younger workers sign up for individual retirement accounts as part of their Social Security future. Such accounts could be an exciting means of helping to rescue Social Security from the crisis it confronts and of enabling people of modest means to accumulate wealth.

The concept, however, is poorly understood among voters, and legislation would encounter fierce resistance. Bush has brought the notion up previously, but also perfunctorily and without result. To show his seriousness, he needed to deal more with the critics and the policy's promise. What we got was yet another bare mention.

Despite the 63 minutes the speech consumed, Bush also gave little time to his pledge to restrain federal spending. How will he go about it? He has failed miserably to keep spending under control the past four years, and his brief comment on the subject Thursday night did not lend him much credibility.

Similarly, Bush said he would aim to simplify taxes, an objective made extremely difficult because his administration has hopelessly complicated them. Reverse is the proper direction, and self-reform ambitions are commendable. But if we are going to have faith in the president, it would have helped to have had more details.

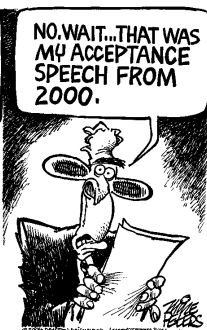
Measured against hope that the president would be inspired and inspiring, the speech fell short. Measured against Kerry's policy proposals, it stands tall. Kerry's domestic agenda consists of throwing money at anything that moves. Although he says he will cut the deficit in half, he also wants to expand dozens of programs and further reduce middle-class taxes; even taking account of his plans to tax the well-to-do more, you can't have to be a math major to see he has problems.

The Bush speech was at its liveliest when he was critical of Kerry.

As Bush said, Kerry opposes lawsuit reform. Bush is for it, and Bush is right. Kerry is against health savings accounts. Bush is for them, and Bush is right.

I thought Bush scored points when reminding us that Kerry had described Ronald Reagan's tenure in office as eight years of "moral darkness." Governmental activism is the liberal's dearest conviction.

Whenever the government is kind enough to leave us alone, as it often was in the Re-



agan years, the liberal is sure evil is afoot.

Bush also scored points in reminding us that, during our war in Iraq, Kerry referred to our allies as a "coalition of the coerced and bribed." Great Britain? Italy? Japan? Australia? It was a wild-eyed thing for Kerry to say. But Kerry has not even seemed clear-eyed on Iraq, or consistent. His acknowledged differences with Bush on actual policies regarding that war are not great, and yet he misleads voters by saying Bush misled the nation into the war. At the same time, Kerry has said he would vote again to give Bush the authority to intervene.

I believed Bush when he said in the speech that he gets up every morning thinking of how to make the world safer. I think he has done a good job on the war on terrorism; if he hadn't, we would have more dates besides Sept. 11, 2001, to haunt us.

As for his convention speech, it sometimes sounded as if it were written by the same proverbial committee that, in trying to invent the horse, came up with the camel. It was not such a good job. On the other hand, it was.

Jay Ambrose is director of editorial policy for Scripps Howard Newspapers.

President on the mark with optimistic proposals

Chicago Tribune

It was no surprise that President Bush stressed his greatest perceived asset among voters — his stewardship of this nation's security — when he spoke Thursday night to an appreciative Republican National Convention. "If America shows uncertainty and weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy," Bush told the party faithful and a global TV audience. "This will not happen on my watch."

But Bush's speech went well beyond his conviction that a proactive — not reactive — military strategy is the best way to keep America safe. He addressed the tectonic shifts in the everyday lives of Americans. Few people now spend their entire careers with one company, and many of today's mothers work outside the home. But, "many of our most fundamental systems — the tax code, health coverage, pension plans, worker training — were created for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow."

His remedy reflects an optimist's faith in the upward economic trajectory of that tomorrow. "We will transform the systems," he said, "so that all citizens are equipped, prepared — and thus truly free — to make your own choices and pursue your own dreams."

Bush's invocation of an "ownership society" advances twin themes of reform: modernizing government programs such as Social Security and providing more vehicles by which Americans can chart and protect — their health care, their careers and their savings.

Convention speeches aren't a good forum for itemizing the details of proposals as ambitious as those Bush floated Thursday night.

Reasonable minds can disagree on those

proposals once the details are on the table. Reforming Social Security, for example, will prove appealing only if the transition cost would be affordable.

But the agenda Bush outlined is a refreshing balm for voters frustrated by decades of nanny-state proposals that hinge on big-government solutions. Bush's agenda dedicates him to the proposition "that government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives."

That's an attractive notion in an era when government has promised more handouts than it can continue to provide. Bush senses the train wreck Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan keeps anticipating: As now constituted, the big entitlement programs — chiefly Social Security and Medicare — at some point will need to raise more revenues (read: payroll taxes), or reduce bene-

fits for an aging baby boom generation.

Bush's proposed reforms, such as permitting Americans to steer the investment of small portions of their government retirement accounts, offer intriguing alternatives. All the more so at a time when Americans are expanding their stakes in this country. More than half of American households now own stocks, and almost 70 percent own their own homes. In short, more and more Americans are accustomed to managing, and maximizing, their finances and futures. Given the opportunity to man-

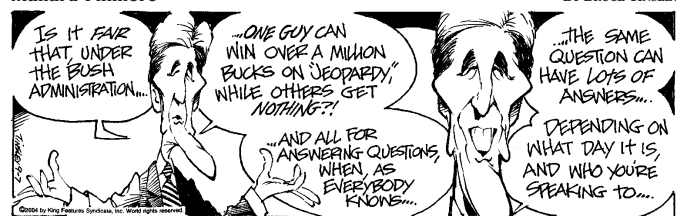
age more of their retirement planning and health care resources, many no doubt would embrace the revolutionary changes Bush proposes for his second term.

Between now and November, John Kerry needs to convince the American people not only that he'd make a fine president, but that they have a pressing need to dismiss the president they now employ. With his crisp speech Thursday night, with his refusal to equivocate or second-guess his evident convictions, George W. Bush didn't make Kerry's challenge any easier.

[The agenda Bush outlined is a refreshing balm for voters frustrated by decades of nanny-state proposals that hinge on big-government solutions.]

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Horoscope

The morning brings a torrent of activity, but it's exceedingly fun. You could find yourself saying "yes" to more responsibility since the first wave was no big deal. Friends are a valuable resource to business, and the reverse is also true. Bosses, beware! Many call in sick today as the moon shines on fun-loving Gemini into home-loving Cancer.

Joyce Jillson



TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(September 7). This year has opportunities galore.

Picking and choosing is where the magic happens. Believe you can have great things, and choose accordingly. At work, you're diplomatic and will ascend to a trusted position in November. Many of you move to be near love or to find a better job in May. Aquarius and Taurus are excellent love matches.

ARIES (March 21-April 19).

Play to win! If you make the sale (and this is especially true if you're "selling" yourself), then your bank account reflects a new level of affluence by this time next month. In general, be gentler with others than you are with yourself.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

The less you try to impress, the more you succeed. Stop worrying what someone thinks of you, and just ask. For many of you, an ex returns. Alimony payments and financial obligations are reduced through better communication.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

You're gracious even when you don't feel like being gracious. As a direct result, good things happen for you down the line. It will mean more because you had to wait. You'd do well to have a little more faith.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

Constant interruptions keep you from being as productive as you would like. But your relationships are the true value in your life. Do what it takes to connect. Visit, and share all that you'd like to share.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

Progress in love is linked to tough choices. In fact, you are brave and ready to do what it takes. Rely on your instincts. Negotiation and

renegotiations are favored. Better arrangements are made with very little effort.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

True friendship — one of your specialties — brings financial opportunities. Be consistent, those around you are reassured by dependability. Hidden costs are discovered. Rectify this now, and you'll save hundreds in the long run.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

Keep trying to connect with that person who is hard to reach. This one has a dire need for help, acknowledgment and love (don't we all?). But it takes a special person (like you) to respond to the needs of others under these stars.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

Now that you're resolute about the changes you want to make in your life, it's a perfect time to share your dreams and goals. If you can get someone to keep you accountable for what you said you would do, you'll stay ahead.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

Cut yourself some slack. Your every move is not being evaluated — that is, except by you. Prospective romantic companions will come on strong. You'll make headway with your creative project.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

Each contact you make with another person gives you a chance to test out your social skills. Perfecting these will help you go far in any area of life on which you focus. Asking in the right way brings instant results.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

In order to create success in your financial realm, you must first believe it can be done. Lately, you've been thinking a little too small. Be open to more input, especially from the people you don't think will be helpful.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

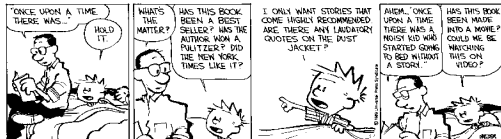
This is the perfect day to shape up your ideas into something viable. This is best done on paper — you'll see the errors and illogical aspects of your plan and be able to fix them before you even embark.

Creators Syndicate

Peanuts



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



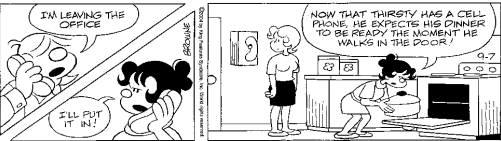
Zits



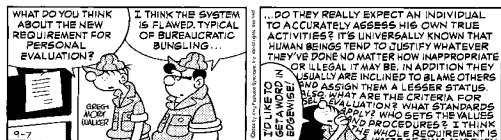
Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



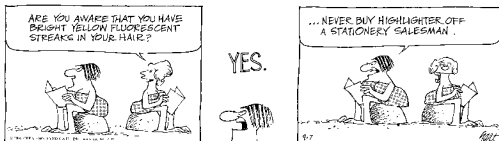
Better or Worse



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



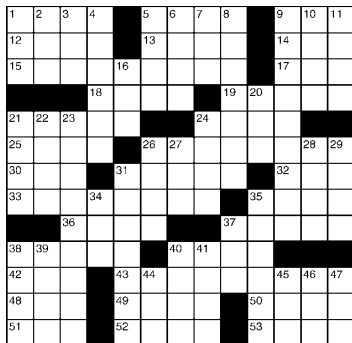
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 "Portnoy's Complaint" writer
- 5 Jettison
- 9 Young fellow
- 12 One side of the Ural
- 13 -- about (roughly)
- 14 Actress MacGraw
- 15 2003 Derby winner
- 17 Simpson's neighbor
- 18 Sudden onrush
- 19 MTV offering
- 21 Arrangement
- 24 Hideaways
- 25 Put your hands together
- 26 Philip Marlowe's creator
- 30 Send out invitations
- 31 Taxpayer's fear
- 32 Anger
- 33 Unnecessary
- 35 Valhalla VIP
- 36 Is out of sorts
- 37 Good, in Guadalupe
- 38 Silent Marx brother
- 40 Thrash
- 42 Sapporo sash
- 43 Internationally
- 48 Antiquated
- 49 Satan's specialty
- 50 "American --"
- 51 Retainer

Down

- 2 TVA structures
- 3 Fail rapidly
- 4 Problem supply
- 6 U.K. fliers
- 7 Columbus sch.
- 8 10th-anniversary gift
- 9 AMA members
- 10 Condominium, e.g.
- 11 Stylish, '60s style
- 12 Forestall
- 13 Big win in November
- 14 Sheltered
- 15 "Thank You" singer
- 16 "Uh-huh"
- 17 Third-party abbr.
- 18 Read bar codes
- 19 Otherwise
- 23 Go by bus
- 24 Lecture locale
- 25 Poolroom
- 26 Mgrs.
- 27 Ms. Brockovich
- 28 Ashcroft's predecessor
- 29 Within the rules
- 30 Party bowlful
- 31 Be clever than
- 32 Awful
- 33 Bit of stock footage?
- 34 Competent
- 35 Edge
- 36 Right angles
- 37 Turkish mountain
- 38 Commerce
- 39 Secretary Evans
- 40 Wapiti

Answer to Previous Puzzle



9-7

CRYPTOQUIP

S 'G V D Z J J U W H S J J D P Z M
G Z H S T R J S R F M P N T K M W .
U N K G S R F M W Z U S ' G

X V K J J D V - X N N V P S T Z M D P .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A YOUNG GYMNAST IS SMART-MOUTHEED, I SUPPOSE HE COULD GIVE YOU FLIP SERVICE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals L

Get out and about to meet people

Dear Abby: "Lonely in Georgia," the woman who divorced her cheating spouse eight years ago, wrote that she's miserably lonely. I know how she feels.

I was widowed four years ago, and when I was ready to date, it seemed impossible to find "Miss Right." By a stroke of good fortune, I discovered an online dating service that matched me with people with shared personality traits and interests.

My first date was with a lady with whom I immediately felt comfortable. We have been seeing each other for six months, are engaged, and intend to be married soon. I hope "Lonely" finds this helpful.

Dear Abby



— "Eureka" in Arizona
Dear "Eureka": Congratulations to you both. Very few people are lucky enough to strike platinum on the first try. I wish you every happiness. Read on:

Dear Abby: I was divorced at 44, and decided to finally do something I'd always wanted to try: country-western dancing. I went not knowing anyone. When a gentleman asked me to dance, he didn't mind that I was a novice. He led me through the basics. He also mentioned free lessons offered by the establishment, and I decided to go. I soon got to know the regulars (even experienced dancers took lessons). Eventually, I met the man who would become my husband. We have been married three years, and I have never been happier.

— **Happily Partnered Again**
Dear **Happily Partnered**: I have often said that if you want to meet new people, get involved in a new activity. My longtime personal assistant, Olivia, also met the man of her dreams, Richard, while square dancing

— and I agree that it can be fertile territory for romance.

Dear Abby: I, too, divorced a cheating spouse.

"Lonely" should consider talking to a therapist to help her regain her self-esteem. After I did it, I focused on attending events and functions where I could meet the kind of man I was interested in. I chose museum and gallery exhibitions and the theater, and went with girlfriends. I met a wonderful man at a group for over-35 singles.

"Lonely" should get out and enjoy herself. I'm sure she'll find the person she's looking for.

— **Been Through It in Georgia**
Dear **Been Through It**: No one ever met anyone by sitting at home and brooding. The most important thing is to put yourself out there.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can email to Abby on the internet at <http://www.uspspress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NLFAK

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STULY

MELFYS

LURIAB

www.jumble.com

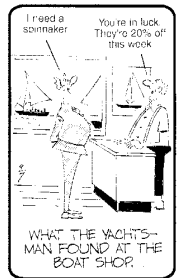
Answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: ENSUE NOISY POPLAR HELPER

Answer: What the champion golfer offered his amateur partners — PRO'S PROSE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argiron



WHAT THE YACHTSMAN FOUND AT THE BOAT SHOP.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Constant PDAs trouble friends

Dear Annie: My friend, "Michele," thinks nothing of making out with her boyfriend, "Eddie," in front of people. They baby-talk and giggle, hug passionately and kiss constantly, while the rest of us sit there in uncomfortable silence. Michele thinks if you don't like it, tough.

Mind you, these two are in their early 40s and old enough to know better. I'm by no means a prude, but I certainly don't want to see such intimate behavior at the dinner table. It's rude, disrespectful and pretty gross.

How would you handle a situation like this? My boyfriend says I should ignore it. I think I should say something. What do you say?

— **Lost My Appetite**

Dear Appetite: Slobbering Public Displays of Affection make most onlookers uncomfortable, and with good reason. This behavior is intimate and should

Annie's Mailbox



be done in private. Simply excuse yourself, saying sweetly, "You obviously want to be alone," and then leave.

Dear Annie: You recently printed a letter from "Getting Desperate," an alcoholic who said AA wasn't a good fit for him. He asked about other alternatives to stay sober.

An excellent recovery group is available nationwide. It's called "Smart Recovery" (www.smartrecovery.org), and it is free and totally secular in nature. They have helped thousands of people regain control of their lives. The emphasis is placed on self-discipline. In addition, the group covers any type of addictive behavior, not just substance abuse. The address is: Smart Recovery, 7537 Mentor Ave., Suite 306, Mentor, OH 44060.

— **Anonynquid**
Dear **Friend**: Several readers recommended Smart Recovery.

We want to thank all those who took the time to help with referrals. Everyone should be able to find something useful here.

From California: Tell him to look for a local branch of Rational Recovery (www.rational.org). It has a very different approach and philosophy. The address is: Rational Recovery, Box 800, Lotus, CA 95651.

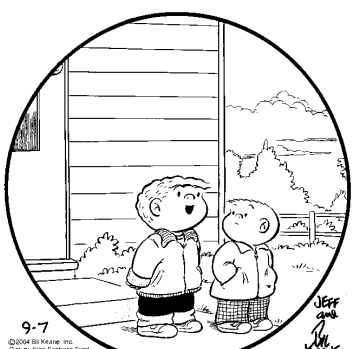
Out East: I'd like to recommend LifeRing (lifering.org) at 1440 Broadway, Suite 312, Oakland, CA 94612-2023 and Women For Sobriety (www.womensobriety.org) at P.O. Box 618, Quakerstown, PA 18951-0618.

Boston: There are alternatives to AA for people who are uncomfortable with the religious/spiritual/theistic aspects of AA. Try Secular Organizations for Sobriety at www.secularhumanism.org.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailbox.comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

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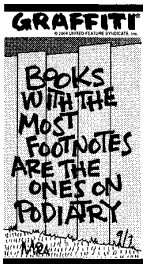
Family Circus



9-7

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"This is a nice day. It must be low-carb."

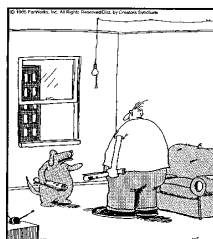


Dennis the Menace



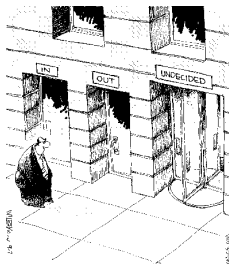
"I think they keep developing new and improved laundry detergent to keep up with Dennis."

The Far Side © Gary Larson



"No way. I'll put my magazine down when you put yours down."

Non Sequitur



Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows. Pressure systems and fronts are for noon today.

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THE WORLD

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| Bermuda | 80 | 70 | Rio de Jan | 83 | 69 |
| Caracas | 77 | 59 | Seoul | 89 | 67 |
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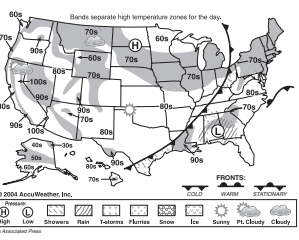
TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

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MIDEAST

THE UNITED STATES TODAY

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Singh in position to overtake Woods

Head-to-head round will determine No. 1, Deutsche Bank title

BY JIMMY GOLEN
The Associated Press

NORTON, Mass. — Tiger and Vijay. No. 1 and No. 2. Head to head.

The Deutsche Bank Championship got a dream matchup for the final round when Vijay Singh shot a 3-under 68 on Sunday to move to 14 under, three strokes ahead of Tiger Woods. It's not just the tournament's \$900,000 first prize at stake: Singh will take over the top spot in the world rankings if he finishes ahead of Woods.

"I'm looking forward to it. I'm in a little better position, I'm 3-up," Singh said with a laugh. "I've played with Tiger many times and I enjoy playing with him. He's a great player. I'm ready to play tomorrow. . . I'm just going to go out there and try to win the golf tournament."

Singh has already won five of them this year — including the PGA Championship, his third major. He leads the tour's money list by an ever-widening margin, and he is running away with the player of the year award.

Now he's within 18 holes of another big prize. But he has to hold off Woods.

"I think it should be a lot of fun — a lot of fun — to go out and compete against Vijay," Woods said. "I think it will just be a blast."

Woods shot a 69 to improve to 11 under and kept pace until Singh birdied No. 18 — after missing a 25-foot putt for eagle. Woods has eight career come-from-behind wins, but none since 2001.

"That gives me even more of a cushion," Singh said. "Every shot in front of Tiger is important."

Singh and Woods are the only players to break 70 in every round; just 12 players broke par Sunday on the 7,415-yard TPC of Boston after 88 rounds in the red the first two days. That left them in the final group with daylight in front of third-place Bill Haas, who bogeyed Nos. 13 and 14 to drop from 11 under to 9 under.

Shigeiki Maruyama was 8 under after shelling par.

Singh has won the last eight tournaments he led going into the final round, including four this year. He needs only to finish ahead of Woods to convince the computers what many humans have known for some time: he's playing the best golf in the world. (The computers factor in performance over the past two years, taking the



AP Photos

Vijay Singh, above, lines up a par putt on the 16th hole in the third round of the Deutsche Bank Championship on Sunday. Singh has a three-stroke lead over Tiger Woods, right, who had a birdie putt stop just to the left of the cup on the 16th. If Singh holds on to win the event, he'll overtake Woods as the No. 1 ranked player in the world.

strength of field into account; Woods held a 12.09-11.91 lead heading into this week.) Woods has been ranked No. 1 for a record 264 consecutive weeks.

Singh made the No. 1 ranking a goal earlier in the year but decided it was too distracting and concentrated on winning tournaments.

"I'm pretty focused," the big Fijian said. "I'm not one to lay down. I'll just go out there and play my game."

The wind picked up, cooling off the air and the field as fall weather came to New England and the players struggled to find their lines. The event, in its second year, features the tour's only scheduled Monday finish.

Singh had three birdies on the front nine, but his best shot was on the 13th hole when he chipped in from the bunker to save par.

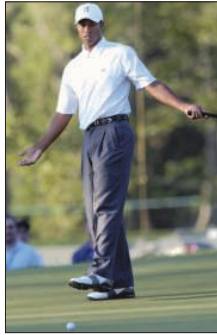
"It's a great equalizer, this game," he

said. "I make a bunker shot on that hole and miss a short putt on the next hole. Woods stayed at 11 under thanks to a pair of pars on the last two holes."

On No. 17, he flew the green and needed a drop to get away from the grandstand, but chipped to 10 feet to save par. He chunked his second shot on 18 short of the green and the ball wound up between two rocks; he had to chip sideways, away from the pin, but he got up and down to avoid losing any ground.

John Rollins was at 11 under before he triple-bogeyed the ninth hole, shanking his drive out of bounds and taking a drop. His third shot was in the rough to the right of the hole, and he needed two tries to get on the green before two-putting.

Singh birdied No. 9 to move to 14 under, so in one hole Rollins dropped from a tie for second to three strokes behind the leader, to six strokes back.



Russia, U.S. meet again in quarters

The Associated Press

TORONTO — Pavel Datsyuk, Alex Kovalev, Sergei Samsonov, Alexei Yashin and Alexander Ovechkin scored to help Russia beat Slovakia 5-2 Sunday night in the final preliminary game in the World Cup of Hockey.

Russia finished second in the North American pool of round-robin play and will meet the United States in a quarterfinal game in St. Paul, Minn., on Tuesday.

Russia dominated the Americans in a 3-1 victory last Thursday in St. Paul.

"I'm not sure if they took us lightly. I'm pretty sure they are going to be ready to go," Samsonov said.

Last-place Slovakia will play first-place Canada in the North American Division's other quarterfinal game in Toronto on Wednesday night.

Marian Hossa and Marian Gaborik scored for Slovakia, 0-3 in the preliminary round. The Slovaks were outscored 13-4.

"We haven't won a game yet so we have to come out against Canada with nothing to lose," defenseman Zdeno Chara said.

The Russians rebounded from a 3-1 loss to Canada on Saturday and finished 2-1 in round-robin play. They beat Slovakia despite being outshot 27-15.

Datsyuk opened the scoring

with a one-timer from the circle at 8:40 of the first period, but Hossa tied it just over two minutes later with a wide-open shot from the side of the net.

Kovalev intercepted a pass at the blue line and scored at 12:01 of the second, and Samsonov gave Russia a 3-1 lead three minutes later.

Yashin made it 4-1 just 54 seconds into the third. Gaborik cut it to 4-2 at 5:47 after intercepting a pass by defenseman Andrei Markov.

But Ovechkin, the top pick in the NHL draft, made it 5-2 just under two minutes later. The Washington Capitals' draft choice was a healthy scratch in Russia's first two games.

Kerr takes third title of year

The Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Despite a poor tee shot at No. 18 and landing in a greenside bunker, Cristie Kerr shot a 3-under 69 and won her third title of the year with a tournament record 24-under 264 at the State Farm Classic.

Christina Kim missed a 4-foot birdie putt at the 18th that would have forced a playoff. She finished with a 6-under 66.

Kerr, who held a four-stroke lead entering the fourth round, squandered her advantage but regained the lead with a birdie at the 17th. She got up-and-down from the bunker and made her par putt at No. 18.

Kim birdied No. 14 and made

two poor chips led to a bogey at the 16th.

Stadler wins again
PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Craig Stadler won his second straight tournament, firing a 6-under 66 for a three-stroke victory over Jay Haas at the inaugural First Tee Open.

Stadler, coming off a win at the Tradition last week in Oregon, had seven birdies and a bogey and never trailed in the final round, finishing at 15-under 201.

Golf roundup

Serena, Roddick advance after powerful displays

Williams to meet Capriati in U.S. Open quarterfinals

BY BEN WALKER
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Serena Williams left her opponent swinging at shadows, then Andy Roddick finished off his work with a 135 mph fastball.

Roddick and Williams easily aced their latest tests in the U.S. Open on Sunday, serving notice that they're just warming up.

Roddick overpowered Guillermo Canas 6-1, 6-3, 6-3, reaching the fourth round with an unbeatable serve and unbelievable ratio: 21 aces, zero double-faults.

"His serve is difficult. Well, almost impossible," Canas said.

In fact, Canas' top first serve was 126 mph; Roddick's average was 129.

"I had a game plan. I executed it. I took it to him," said Roddick, who next plays No. 18 Tommy Robredo.

"I really don't have a magical explanation for it."

Williams was almost as impressive: 12 aces and only one double-fault in a 6-4, 6-2 romp over Patty Schnyder. After it was over, Schnyder sounded a lot like Canas.

"When she serves that well, I will never be able to make a break," she said. "If she serves like this, it's hard for anybody."

The victory sent Williams into

the quarterfinals against a most familiar opponent, Jennifer Capriati.

Williams is 10-6 lifetime against Capriati, including 3-3 in Grand Slam events. Capriati beat Williams in the French Open quarters this year, then lost to her in the Wimbledon quarters.

"I like playing Jennifer a lot. I really do," Williams said. "We always play each other. We really know each other's games."

Lleyton Hewitt, Amelie Mauresmo and Tommy Haas were among the other winners as the first week at Flushing Meadows wrapped up.

In early play Monday, Roger Federer reached the quarterfinals for the first time when No. 16 Andrei Pavel pulled out of their match with a herniated disc.

The top-ranked Federer, trying to be the first man since 1988 to win three Grand Slam titles in a year, had never been past the Open's fourth round.

He'll play Tuesday champion Andre Agassi or Sargis Sargsian in the quarters.

Pavel missed six months last year with injuries to his back and right wrist.

In perhaps the most unusual match Sunday, sixth-seeded Elena Dementieva beat No. 10 Vera Zvonareva 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 in a matchup of Russians.

Zvonareva cried between points, hit herself in the foot with her racket and berated herself.

Justine Henin-Hardenne will be in action Monday night. Agassi and Venus Williams will be among those playing earlier in the day.

Serena Williams showed no ill effects from the painful left knee that forced her to pull out of last month's Olympics. The two-time Open champion had surgery on it in August 2003, and missed 8½ months while recovering.

In fact, she said a few doctors advised her to skip this tournament.

"My knee is doing pretty good right now. I haven't had any worries," she said. "I'm just excited to be here because I wasn't supposed to come."

The six-time Grand Slam winner wore basic black. Earlier in the week, she attracted quite a bit of attention with black, form-fitting shorts and a studded, tight tank top — she warned up that day with black, knee-high boots.

Supermodel Naomi Campbell was on hand to watch Williams. They've gone shopping together in Los Angeles.

Capriati rallied in the first set and went on to beat No. 12 Ai Sugiyama 7-5, 6-2. Staving off a set point by winning an 18-strake exchange, Capriati won the final four games.



Serena Williams had 12 aces in her 6-4, 6-2 victory over Patty Schnyder of Switzerland in the U.S. Open on Sunday in New York.

Next up, Serena.

"I've played her at her best. I've played her at her worst," Capriati said. "I've played her at my best, me at my worst. I can just only worry about myself, really."

Hewitt, the 2001 Open champion, won all 16 points on his serve in the first set and cruised past Feliciano Lopez 6-1, 6-4, 6-2.

Haas also reached the fourth

round with a 6-2, 6-3, 7-5 win over Ricardo Mello, while Robredo beat Alexander Peya 6-3, 6-3, 6-2. No. 28 Joachim Johansson downed Stefan Koubek 6-7 (2), 7-6 (1), 6-1, 6-3. Michael Llodra topped Jurgen Melzer 6-3, 6-2, 7-5 and Tomas Berdych beat Mikhail Youzhny 2-6, 6-1, 6-3, 4-6, 6-1.

Dementieva advanced to face No. 2 Amelie Mauresmo, who beat No. 19 Francesca Schiavone 6-4, 6-2.

Younger Bubka hoping to scale heights, too

BY BEN WALKER
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — He's got the same name as his famous father.

He's also got a lot of athletic ability.

Only this Sergei Bubka is hoping to raise himself up with a tennis racket, rather than a fiberglass pole.

One of the 1988 Olympic champion and world record holder in the pole vault, Bubka made his U.S. Open debut Sunday in the junior event. He lost in singles to Scott Oudema of Kalamazoo, Mich., 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, and was to play doubles on Monday.

"Everything was working in the first set," Bubka said. "The second set, I got a little more defensive. I think that carried through for the rest of the match."

Chances are, he'll hear from dad about that.

"He gives me mental tips," the 17-year-old Bubka said.

"That's where he helps the most. He'll talk about doing everything to perfection, about always doing your best."

Born in the Ukraine, Bubka

U.S. Open notebook

and his family live in Monte Carlo.

His 40-year-old father has seen him only once this year, at a tournament in Italy.

"He's very supportive, but he lets me do my own thing," the teen said. "He doesn't want to get in my way."

Occasionally, they hit tennis balls together. Dad took up the sport after retiring following his sixth world title in the pole vault.

He plays for fun. He's all right — for an amateur," young Bubka said with a smile.

Bubka reached the semifinals of the 2003 Wimbledon junior event, and has also twice played juniors at the Australian Open. This was his first visit to New York. "It's pretty big," and he's already looking forward to playing at Flushing Meadows next year.

Bubka's father dominated pole vaulting for more than a decade.

His indoor record of 20 feet, 2 inches, set in 1993, still stands; his outdoor mark of 20 feet, 1¼ inches, done in 1994, also remains the record.



Sergey "Sergel" Bubka, of the Ukraine, son of Olympic pole vault champion Sergei Bubka, hits a return to Scott Oudema, of the United States, in their boys singles match in the U.S. Open on Sunday in New York.

There never was much chance that his son would scale those heights.

"I tried it once when I was young, after I had started playing tennis," Bubka said. "It was pretty tough. I made it over the bar. But it wasn't very high. The pole didn't even bend."

Doubles doings: The defending men's doubles champions are

done in the U.S. Open. The 2003 runners-up are gone, too.

Top-seeded Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden and Todd Woodbridge of Australia wasted leads in each of the last two sets and were upset 2-6, 7-5, 6-4 in the third round Sunday by No. 13 Leander Paes of India and David Rikl of the Czech Republic.

"We let one get away," said Woodbridge, owner of a record 81 doubles titles, including 16 in Grand Slams. "It was a really good match — everybody played well — but we had the upper hand and had some bad service games."

He and Bjorkman led 5-4 in the second set before losing three straight games. Then, ahead 4-1 in the third, the defending champs dropped five games in a row.

Last year, Woodbridge and Bjorkman beat American twins Bob and Mike Bryan in the Open final. The Bryans lost their third-round match Sunday night.

In mixed doubles, Paes teamed with Martina Navratilova to defeat Els Callens and Martin Damm 6-3, 6-4 and reached the quarterfinals.

Their next foes: Wimbledon singles champion Maria Sharapova and Max Mirnyi, who eliminated siblings Cara and Wayne Black 6-3, 7-6 (4).

I can hit this: At only 17, Scoville Jenkins got a rude welcome to the U.S. Open a few days ago when Andy Roddick overwhelmed him with a tournament-record 152 mph serve.

Jenkins played more at his own speed Sunday when he beat Divij Sharan 6-4, 6-1 in the first round at the Open's junior tournament.

"I saw the fastest serve probably that any man can hit," Jenkins said. "Now I feel like I could hit any serve."

Roddick whipped 12 aces past Scoville. Asked that day how it felt to return a 152 mph racket, Jenkins smiled.

"I don't know," he said. "I didn't return it."

Jenkins reached the semifinals of the junior event at Wimbledon, and was seeded 10th at this tournament. He said he enjoyed playing Roddick and Sharan.

"I was really nervous going in. It was fun, both times," he said. "To get a win under my belt, that felt pretty good."

Chase: Labonte, Harvick falter in Cup standings

CHASE, FROM BACK PAGE

"I hate it that all those cautions came out there at the end," said Martin, a four-time series runner-up. "That was our shot, but I'm thrilled to death to run third here, but still have a shot at getting into the Chase in Richmond, along with Dale Jarrett and Jeremy Mayfield. Harvick fell to 15th, 56 points out of 10th.

Both Bobby Labonte, who finished 21st, and Kevin Harvick, who was 28th, fell out of the top 10, but still have a shot at getting into the Chase in Richmond, along with Dale Jarrett and Jeremy Mayfield. Harvick fell to 15th, 56 points out of 10th.

Martin, who led a race-high 65 laps, took the lead from Kahne on lap 217, but a spin by Dale Earnhardt Jr. brought out a caution flag on the next trip around the 2-mile oval and brought the leaders to pit road.

Rookie Brian Vickers only took two tires and grabbed the lead,

with Martin, Sadler and Kahne right behind. On the restart on lap 230, Sadler drove high on the banking and raced to the lead. He stayed there the rest of the way, holding off Kahne and Martin on one last restart with 10 laps to go after a crash involving Earnhardt and Ken Schrader. The winner led a total of 59 laps.

Jeff Gordon, who won the race here earlier this year, ran over debris and damaged his car early in the race. He wound up 37th after his engine blew. Jimmie Johnson, his teammate, finished 14th but took over the series points lead from Gordon, by 50 points.

Earnhardt, third in the points, was already locked into the top 10 going into the race, while fourth-place Tony Stewart and fifth-place Matt Kenseth, the defending series champion, both wrapped up a shot at the title at California, finishing 18th and 22nd.



Elitti Sadler, left, and Kasey Kahne battle during Sunday's race.

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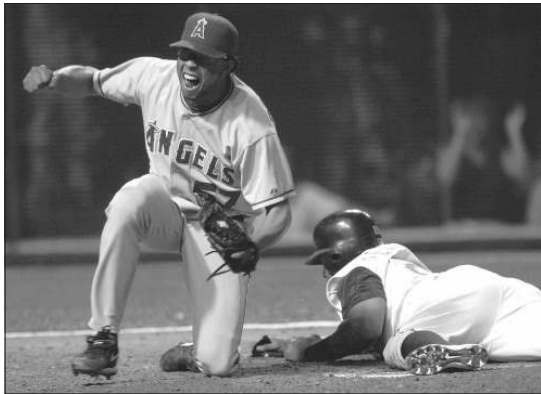
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Anaheim Angels pitcher Francisco Rodriguez celebrates after tagging out Cleveland Indians runner Ronnie Bellard at home plate in the eighth inning on Sunday in Cleveland. The Angels won 2-1, their 15th victory in 20 games, and closed to within three games of the AL West-leading Oakland A's.

Schilling fans 10 in 18th win

Red Sox head west after going 9-1 on homestand

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Curt Schilling pitched into the ninth inning for his major league-leading 18th win and the Boston Red Sox completed a 9-1 homestand with a 6-5 victory over the Texas Rangers on Sunday.

"Phenomenal homestand," Schilling said. "We played such good baseball in every aspect."

He was confident the Red Sox can beat any team — at home or on the road.

"I just feel like we are such a good team right now that we can win with pitching, hitting, defense, bullpen ... whatever it needs, whatever you need to do on a given night to win," the ace said.

"And that's what championship teams do."

David Ortiz hit his 35th homer and the Red Sox, who had their 10-game winning streak snapped on Saturday, remained 2½ games behind the Yankees in the AL East. New York beat Baltimore 4-3.

Boston, which opens a seven-game road trip on Monday at AL West-leading Oakland, has won 17 of its last 19 overall, and 12 of its last 13 at Fenway.

"We did what we have to do this homestand," Boston manager Terry Francona said. "We have to go out, take care of business and take advantage of what we've done so far."

Schilling (18-6) allowed three runs and five hits in 8½ innings, struck out 10 and didn't walk a batter in winning his fifth straight start.

Michael Young homered twice for the Rangers, who fell seven games behind the Red Sox in the wild-card race.

AL Roundup

"We met a hot Boston team with a great pitcher on the mound," Young said. "The best thing we can do is put this behind us."

Schilling had his third game this season with 10 or more strikeouts, and 89th of his career. He was going for his fourth complete game of the season and 83rd of his career, but Eric Young singled with one out in the ninth and Michael Young hit his 18th homer to end Schilling's day.

Keith Foulke came in and gave up two runs on pinch-hitter David Dellucci's two-run single with two outs before getting Kevin Mench to line out to end it.

Ryan Drese (11-8) took the loss, allowing four runs and seven hits in six innings.

Yankees 4, Orioles 3: Jorge Posada drew a bases-loaded walk from Jorge Julio (2-3) in the ninth, giving the Yankees the victory.

Derek Jeter reached base four times and scored three runs for the Yankees, who rallied from a three-run deficit for their major league-leading 53rd comeback win. Bernie Williams had his first sacrifice bunt since 1996, moving Jeter to third in the ninth.

"These are the games you have to know how to win," Jeter said.

Rafael Palmeiro hit a three-run homer in the first inning for the Orioles, who were looking for their first three-game sweep at Yankee Stadium since June 6-8, 1996.

Mariano Rivera (4-1) pitched out of a first-and-third, none-out jam in the ninth for the win.

Blue Jays 13, Athletics 5: Rookie Gabe Gross' first career grand slam and Russ Adams' first major league homer led the Blue Jays to a rout of the visiting A's.

Carlos Delgado also homered for the last-place Blue Jays, who avoided a three-game sweep. Ryan Glynn (1-0) allowed two runs and four hits in five innings for his first win since May 5, 2001.

Royals 12, Twins 3: Jimmy Gobble (7-8) pitched a six-hitter for his first career complete game.

Joe Randa went 4-for-5 with a homer, and David DeJesus hit a two-run homer in the Royals' first win in nine games at the Metrodome.

Angels 2, Indians 1: John Lackey (12-11) allowed two hits in 7½ innings to lead the Angels to a three-game sweep in Cleveland that pulled them within three games of first-place Oakland.

Francisco Rodriguez worked out of a jam in the eighth, blocking the plate after taking a blind backhanded throw from catcher Bengie Molina to get a sliding Ronnie Bellard. Rodriguez also worked a perfect ninth for his 11th save.

Troy Glaus homered off Jake Westbrook (12-7) for Anaheim, which has won 15 of 20.

White Sox 6, Mariners 2: At Chicago, Joe Borchard and Paul Konerko each hit two-run homers to back a strong outing by Felix Diaz (2-4) and the White Sox won their third straight.

Ichiro Suzuki went 1-for-4 to give him a major league-leading 224 hits, 38 short of the single-season record of 257 hits, set by George Sisler in 1920 with the St. Louis Browns.

Cardinals run streak to nine with sweep

The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Reggie Sanders hit a pin-hit RBI single and Giovanni Carrara (4-2) in the 11th inning and the St. Louis Cardinals completed a three-game sweep of the Los Angeles Dodgers with a 6-5 win Sunday for their ninth straight victory.

Ray King (5-2) struck out one in a scoreless 11th for the Cardinals, whose winning streak is their longest since winning 10 in a row in 2001. They hadn't trailed during the streak until Adrian Beltré hit his NL-leading 44th homer in the second inning.

The Cardinals wrapped up a 6-0 homestand and won for the 14th time in 16 games.

John Mabry homered and Jim Edmonds tied a career high with three doubles for St. Louis, which entered the ninth with a 2-2 lead. The Dodgers tied it with three runs on four hits off Jason Irlinghouse.

St. Louis' Larry Walker sprained his right knee when he slipped while fielding Jose Hernandez's single in the fifth. Walker had an MRI exam that revealed a small bone bruise but no structural damage, and he's listed as day to day.

The NL Central-leading Cardinals swept the West-leading Dodgers for the first time since June 25-26, 2000, extending their winning lead to 17½ games.

Astros 10, Pirates 5: At Houston, Mike Lamb went 4-for-5 with a homer and four RBIs to lead the Astros to their ninth straight win.

Carlos Beltran added three hits as the Astros moved within 1½ games of the San Francisco and idle Chicago for the NL wild-card lead.

Roundup

Houston has won 12 of 13 and 17 of 20 and is on its longest winning streak since the Astros won a franchise-record 12 straight Sept. 3-14, 1999.

Rockies 5, Padres 2: Vinny Castilla hit his 30th homer, and Jeremy Burnitz and Matt Holliday also connected for visiting Colorado, which handed the Padres their fifth loss in six games.

The Padres keep losing ground in the tight wild-card race, falling 2½ games behind San Francisco and idle Chicago. They were beaten by rookie lefty Jeff Francis (1-2), who came in with a 13.50 ERA, but got his first win in their third big league start.

Francis, the Rockies' first-round draft pick in 2002, held the Padres to five hits in 5½ scoreless innings. He lowered his ERA to 8.59 and allowed just one runner as far as third base. He struck out three and walked one.

Brian Lawrence (13-12) lost for the fifth time in his last seven decisions. He allowed three runs and seven hits in seven innings, struck out three and walked three.

Phillies 4, Mets 2: At Philadelphia, Brett Myers threw three hits and seven innings to help the Phillies sweep New York and send the Mets to their ninth straight loss.

Mike Lieberthal and Jimmy Rollins homered for the Phillies, who moved back to .500 — at 66-68 — for the first time since Aug. 29.

Philadelphia has won six of



St. Louis Cardinals' Jim Edmonds tied his career high with three doubles Sunday in the Cardinals' 6-5 win over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

nine, but is 6½ games behind idle Chicago in the NL wild-card race.

Myers (8-9) followed impressive outings from Gavin Floyd and Cory Lidle, who allowed only one earned run in 16 innings. Tim Lincecum got three outs in his 17th save.

Expos 4, Braves 3 (12): At Montreal, Tony Batista hit a one-out RBI double in the 12th inning and the Expos ended a three-game losing streak.

Endy Chavez drew a one-out walk off Juan Cruz (4-2) in the 12th.

Batista followed with a drive high off the wall in left-center as Chavez trotted home with the winning run while his teammates spilled out of the dugout to greet him.

Brad Wilkerson homered and Brian Schneider tied a career high with four hits for the Expos.

T.J. Tucker (4-2) allowed one hit and struck out one in the 12th to pick up the win.

J.D. Drew hit his career-high 30th homer for Atlanta, which had its five-game winning streak end. The Braves have lost just twice in their last 13 games and are .35-13 since the All-Star break.

Reds 9, Brewers 2: Adam Dunn hit a three-run homer and Luke Hudson pitched six strong innings for visiting Cincinnati.

Ryan Freel went 3-for-5 with a home run for the Reds, who snapped a five-game losing streak. The Reds had been outscored 46-13 and had a team ERA of 8.58 during the skid.

Hudson (2-1), making his fifth start of the season, gave up only one hit and struck out four. Joe Valentine and Juan Padilla pitched the final three innings for the Reds.

Giants pull into tie for NL wild card

By GREG BEACHAM

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Edgardo Alfonzo hit a two-run homer, Randy Johnson in the fifth inning, and the San Francisco Giants moved into a virtual tie atop the NL wild-card standings with a 4-1 win over Arizona on Sunday.

Brett Tomko (9-6) pitched seven impressive innings on a sprained right ankle, getting eight strikeouts in his fourth straight victory. Ray Durham had an RBI single as the Giants finished a three-game sweep of the Diamondbacks and moved into a virtual tie with the Cubs, whose weekend series in Florida was postponed by Hurricane Frances. San Francisco (76-63, .547) has played six more games than Chicago (73-60, .549), which probably will face a slate of doubleheaders in the final four weeks of the season.

The Giants also pulled within 3½ games of the NL West-leading Los Angeles Dodgers, who were swept by St. Louis.

San Francisco rallied from behind in all three victories over Arizona — and in the finale, the Giants did it without much help from Barry Bonds, who went 1-for-2 with two more walks, including his 101st intentional pass. The Giants' 10th season of 194 walks — four shy of his major league record from 2002.

Dustin Hermanson struck out three in the ninth for his 10th save in 12 chances.

Not even Johnson (12-13) could prevent Arizona from falling 53 games below .500 for the first time in franchise history. Despite striking out seven and raising his major league-leading total to 249, the Big Unit lost his third straight start against the Giants, allowing seven hits and two walks while pitching into the seventh.

Yankees pitcher Brown vows this season

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Kevin Brown had successful surgery on his broken left hand Sunday and vowed to pitch again for the New York Yankees this season.

"I don't know how much you want to know. I've pitched in more pain than I have right now," he said sternly.

The right-hander is still expected to miss at least three weeks after breaking two bones in his non-pitching hand when he punched a wall in the clubhouse Friday night, an immature act of frustration that could cost his team dearly.

Brown had two pins placed in his hand at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center on Sunday morning. With a large bandage wrapped around his hand, he was back at Yankee Stadium answering questions from reporters an hour before New York played the Baltimore Orioles.

A contrite Brown apologized to his teammates personally, and of-

fered an apology to the en-
to the en-
organization
and Yankees fans for
leaving the
club short-handed in the middle
of a tight pennant race.

"They all deserve one," he said. "I made a mistake of letting my emotions take over. If there was any way in the world I could take it back, I would... It's my fault. I take blame. I don't expect anybody to understand."

When asked what made him throw a left at the wall instead of a right, Brown said: "Years of experience."

The 39-year-old Brown said the same intensity that made him lose his temper has driven him to succeed throughout his big league career. He said he'll return to the mound as soon as his doctor allows, but there was no doubt in his mind it will be this season.

Asbly rejoins Padres

SAN DIEGO — The San Diego

Padres brought back right-hander Andy Asbly on Sunday and plan to use him out of the bullpen. The Padres purchased Asbly's contract after he successfully rehabbed his right elbow from Tommy John surgery, performed last Oct. 20. He last pitched in the majors for the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2003, going 3-10 with a 5.18 ERA.

The Padres signed him to a minor league contract on March 30. He hasn't pitched at any level this season.

Asbly pitched for the Padres from 1993-1999, going 70-62 with a 3.60 ERA. He helped the Padres win the NL West title in 1996 and the NL pennant in 1998, and was an All-Star in 1998 and 1999.

Asbly has a career record of 98-110 with a 4.13 ERA. He's also pitched for Philadelphia, Colorado and Atlanta.

Mantle jersey up for auction

DALLAS — An original, unaltered-for-minor-leagues New York Yankees uniform worn by

Mickey Mantle in 1963 will be sold in a public auction and could fetch \$100,000 or more, according to Heritage Galleries of Dallas.

Until the 1970s, it was common practice to send major league jerseys down to the minors at season's end, said Chris Ivy, director of sports auctions for Heritage Galleries.

"The old numbers and logos, such as the Yankees' 'NY' over the heart, would be removed and replaced with the new team's insignia," Ivy said. "As a result, almost all other Mickey Mantle game-worn jerseys in existence today have been restored following minor league alterations."

The sale will be conducted Friday and Saturday in Long Beach, Calif., and online at www.HeritageSportsCollectibles.com.

The auction also will include a Sandy Koufax game-worn jersey from the Dodgers' final season in Brooklyn, N.Y., as well as the "Thrilla in Manila" boxing gloves worn by Joe Frazier when he

fought Muhammad Ali in the Philippines in October 1975.

Also for sale will be a Ted Williams game-used foul ball, glove and the first baseball hit for a home run by Willie McCovey, the San Francisco Giants star.

Former R-A's MacDougall among Royals' call-ups

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Former All-Star Mike MacDougall was among four players called up Sunday by the Kansas City Royals.

MacDougall was 3-3 with 24 saves and a 2.59 ERA when he was selected to the All-Star team in 2003. After the break, the right-hander went 0-2 with three saves and a 6.85 ERA.

He began this season on the 15-day disabled list, then appeared in five games, posting a 10.80 ERA. He went 1-0 with one save and a 1.56 ERA in 16 games for Double-A Wichita.

Kansas City also called up right-hander Denny Bautista, lefthander Chris George and catcher Paul Phillips.

SPORTS



Heisman-winning QB Couch,
ex-Packer Levens among
final NFL roster cuts, Page 27

For Sadler, the chase is on

Victory at California clinches spot in NASCAR's postseason

By MIKE HARRIS
The Associated Press

FONTANA, Calif. — Now, Elliott Sadler can go home and enjoy himself.

Thanks to his victory Sunday night in the Pop Secret 500 at California Speedway, all the Virginia native has to do is start next week in Richmond to assure himself a spot in NASCAR's new Chase for the Nextel Cup championship.

"The pressure is off," Sadler said. "We are in the Chase. That was our goal and we are in the show. We have nothing to lose and we're going to go have fun, race hard and whatever happens happens."

In NASCAR's new championship format, only the top 10 drivers following the Richmond race Saturday night will be eligible to compete for the title over the final 10 races. Moreover, they will begin the battle separated by just five-point increments, with the 10th-place driver only 45 behind the leader.

Sadler said that makes him and his No. 38 Robert Yates Racing Ford team real contenders.

"I think we can win this championship," said Sadler, who has never finished better than 20th in the season standings during his six seasons in NASCAR's top series. "You know why? Because we have been very, very consistent."

"We could have cracked coming down the stretch with pressure, but we were in the top 10 every single week except maybe for one race. That's showing that this is a strong race team and we've come a long way this year."

The 29-year-old racer from Emporia, Va., won for the second time this season and third time in his career. He easily held off rookie Kasey Kahne and Mark Martin at the end of the 250-lap race — with the help of a couple of late caution flags that slowed the two challengers.

But Kahne, who finished second for the fifth time this season, and Martin climbed into the top 10 in the points. Kahne is ninth and Martin 10th, nine points behind.







Jamie McMurray finished fourth in the race and jumped from a tie for 14th to 11th, 25 points behind Martin.

Kahne said he was surprised that Sadler came on so strong at the end.

"Elliott beat us both there at the end," he

On the home stretch

How the drivers battling for the finals spots in NASCAR's Chase for the Nextel Cup fared this week: Ten drivers will qualify for the 10-race shootout, which begins Sept. 19.

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| ↑ |  | Ryan Newman Started day in 10th, but solidified his hold on a spot with just one race to go. |
| ↑ |  | Kasey Kahne Vaulted back into Chase with fifth runner-up finish of rookie season. |
| ↑ |  | Mark Martin Was in 15th place at end of July, now holds final Chase spot by 25 points. |
| ↑ |  | Jamie McMurray Leapt into 11th with fourth top-10 finish in past five races. |
| ↓ |  | Bobby Labonte Finished 20th and fell out of top 10; hasn't had a top-10 finish since July 3. |
| ↑ |  | Dale Jarrett Veteran is just 43 points out of last Chase spot heading into final race. |

said. "It was a little surprising. I think both our Dodge and Mark Martin were a little better than the 38 (Sadler) for most of the race. But he held his own and he had the car to beat there at the end."

Martin did appear to have the strongest car through much of the race. But he couldn't seem to get his car up to top speed for 10 to 20 laps after each of the track record 11 caution flags in the race that began in 99-degree heat of the late afternoon and ended in the cooler temperatures after dark under California Speedway's new lights.

SEE CHASE ON PAGE 29



Elliott Sadler celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the Nextel Cup Pop Secret 500 at the California Speedway on Sunday in Fontana, Calif. Sadler clinched a spot in NASCAR's 'Chase for the Nextel Cup,' starting Sept. 19 at New Hampshire International Speedway.

**Sanders
knocks in
winning run
in 11th as
Cardinals
sweep
Dodgers**

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**Tennessee routs
UNLV behind
history-making
freshmen QBs**

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**Former champs
Roddick,
Serena Williams
state their case
in effortless
U.S. Open wins**

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